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Transactions

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PART IV.

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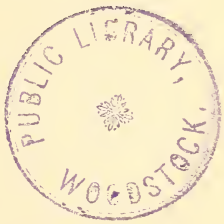
1913

London and Middlesex Historical Society

Transactions 1911-12

The Battle at Longwoods

J. I. Poole, B.A.



Reminiscences of Mrs. Gilbert Porte

Miss Priddis

The Mackenzies of Hyde Park

Mrs. Evans

1913.
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The Public Library Board grants the Society the free use of a room for its meetings, which are held on the third Tuesday evening of each month, from October to April, inclusive, and to which the public are invited—admission always free. Membership in the Society is open to any person interested in its objects, and is maintained by the payment of an annual fee of fifty cents.

TRANSACTIONS 1911-12

1911

Oct. 24—

The Roman Catholic Church in Canada (Part I.)
President Murphy.

Nov. 21—

Imperialism
John Stevenson, Esq.

Dec. 19—

The Bar of Middlesex (Part I.)
Judge D. J. Hughes.

1912

Jan. 16—

Earlier History of the Western University
President N. C. James, M.A.

Feb. 20—

Reminiscences of a Sheriff's Office
Sheriff D. M. Cameron.

March 19—

The Bar of Middlesex (Part II.)
Thos. H. Purdom, K. C.

April 16—

Some Politicians of Early London
Cl. T. Campbell, M.D.

May 21—

Ceremonial of Six Nations (Indian)
Prof. Dearness, M.A.

THE FIGHT AT BATTLE HILL

INTRODUCTION.

The following narrative of the fight at "Battle Hill," or rather of Longwood (which is the name set forth in nearly all the early records) is written with a three-fold object.

In the first place, I was anxious, from a personal standpoint, to become familiar with its details; secondly, it occurred to me that this piece of local history should be rescued from the oblivion into which it had apparently fallen; and thirdly, this account is given to the public at the instance of the Middlesex Historical Society, through my friend, Mr. Frank E. Leonard, of London, Ontario, one of its officers, who communicated with me to the above effect, while I was residing and practicing at Comber, Ontario, and the good work of which society, I fear, is not being sufficiently appreciated by the county generally.

No doubt it will be conceded on all hands that the details of this, the only fight that took place within the limits of the present county of Middlesex during the war of 1812-14, should by all means be kept in remembrance from the fact that, unlike such counties as Lincoln, Welland, Essex, Kent and some others, its historic ground is very considerably circumscribed.

The writer has tried by all available means in his power to make the statements contained within the pages of the

accompanying story correct to a degree, and in the interests of historical accuracy, criticism, from whatever source it may come, is cheerfully invited.

Traditional evidence in the writing of this narrative has been almost entirely left out of the question. It has, in nearly every instance in which it was taken into consideration, been so flatly contradictory of the official and other contemporary documents as to be practically worthless, and thus has been, for the above reasons, laid aside almost altogether.

From my own experience as a legal practitioner, I find that a writer of any sort cannot be too particular in thoroughly sifting and weighing the various kinds and degrees of evidence placed before him, and that idea has, it is hoped, been constantly kept before me in the preparation of this short, historical sketch.

This recital, as it now appears, varies in some particulars considerably from the narrative as it appeared in my paper read at London, Ontario, in May, 1903, for the reason that I have discovered since that time much new documentary evidence, which has been used in correcting and adding to my manuscript. If failures have been made in the production of this rehearsal, either through errors, or in any other way, it is earnestly trusted that some of my readers at least will take the trouble to set me right.

I cannot conclude without expressing my thanks to the following gentlemen who, among others, have assisted me by all means in their power in the production of this pamphlet, namely:—Judge Woods, of Chatham, Ontario; Colonel E. Porter Thompson, late of Frankfort, Kentucky; Mr. C. M. Burton, of Detroit, Michigan; Mr. Avern Pardoe and Colonel Irving, of Toronto, Ontario, and Lt.-Col. Cruickshank, of Niagara Falls, Ontario, and also the Registrars of Deeds at Chatham, Simcoe and Guelph, Ont. In nearly every instance in which I have communicated with parties asking for information in the preparation of this pamphlet (and they were not few) assistance has been cheerfully and promptly given.

"Pulchrumque mori sucurrit in armis."—Vergil Aeneid, B. 2, V. 317.

Often and often during my childhood and High School days did I visit the scene of this action, hoping to find some relics of an engagement in which our arms suffered a reverse, but I was always unsuccessful in my little explorations. In fact I met with very indifferent success when I turned to the people who I thought might possibly know something concerning the details of this struggle, which after all seemed to be nothing more than a mere memory, the particulars of which were beyond a hope of successful resurrection. When again I looked into the current histories of my native land which I was able to lay hold of, at that time, I was again doomed to disappointment, and very bitter disappointment too, as this conflict in many of them was not even mentioned, while in others it was only barely alluded to, and thus my curiosity was not in the least degree satisfied.

Some of those whom I questioned thought that the Americans were the victors, and others thought that the British were the victors, while a third party seemed only to be amused at my youthful anxieties respecting the details and result of an almost forgotten fight, and skilfully concealed their want of knowledge of the matter in hand by a knowing smile. And thus the affair dropped almost entirely out of my own mind for more than a decade.

Maturer years, however, brought the subject back to my recollection with increased interest, as the scene of this struggle is located within a very few miles of the home where I passed the earlier period of my life. As succeeding years followed, greater facilities presented themselves to me for acquiring contemporary documentary evidences of what did actually transpire in connection with this action, thus enabling me to give at least a tolerably correct account of an event so intimately connected with the past history of a locality, now embraced within the limits of the present county of Middlesex, and of the township of Mosa more especially.

The result of my enquiries is now given to the public, and in order that the events immediately preceding, and leading up to this engagement may be better understood, I propose to lay before my readers a brief resume of the war between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon family.

Without going fully into the causes of the war of 1812-14, I might simply state that the ostensible reason for it was the

dissatisfaction which the American authorities felt at the "right of search" exercised by the British, in overhauling their vessels to seek for deserters from the British navy. But the real cause of the memorable struggle lay in the desire of the United States to conquer Upper and Lower Canada, as well as the other British North American provinces, and thus annex their territories to those of the great Republic.

President Madison, in many respects a well-meaning man, coerced by such of his political friends as John Caldwell Calhoun and Henry Clay, "yielded against the dictates of his better judgment and thereby brought on three years of war against the Mother Country, which gave not one compensating advantage." War was thus accordingly declared on the 18th day of June, 1812, although public opinion in the New England States of the Union strongly condemned the Federal Government in its hositility towards Great Britain.

Right here it may perhaps be not out of place to observe that the Americans themselves exercised the same "right of search" in regard to a British vessel in 1861 which they complained that Great Britain had done in 1812.

The Indians of the West and Northwest, smarting under the stings produced by their defeat under Elksottawa, or Laulewasekaw, the prophet-brother of the renowned Tecumseh, by the Americans under General William Henry Harrison at Tippecanoe on Nov. 7th, 1811, and influenced also by Col. Matthew Elliott, the British Commandant at Amherstburg, were inclined at first to ally themselves with the British, but after the capture of the American post at Mackinac by Captain Charles Roberts at the very commencement of the war, they, naturally anxious to be on the winning side, showed no hesitation, in a very large measure, in casting in their fortunes with the British, and arraying themselves against the hated "Longknives."

The surrender of Fort Detroit by the American general William Hull, on Aug. 16th, 1812, to the British under Maj. Gen. Sir Isaac Brock, assisted by a large body of Indians under Tecumseh, the head chief of the Shawanoes, soon followed.

Thus ended in disaster and disgrace the first invasion of Canada, since by the terms of this capitulation the whole American army of the Northwest, consisting of 2,500 men with their arms and military magazines, including an armed brig, passed into the hands of the British authorities, as did also the entire possession of the then territory of Michigan, which included besides the present State of that name the adjoining one of Wisconsin and portions of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

After this brilliant feat of arms, Brock hastily proceeded to Fort George on the Niagara River, leaving Colonel Henry Proc-

ter (not Proctor) in command of the troops of the Right Division, with headquarters at Sandwich, and Lieut.-Col. Robert Nicol of the Norfolk Militia in charge of the garrison at Detroit, while the Indians under Tecumseh and Roundhead (Brandy-Jack) retired to the country opposite Amherstburg, on the Michigan side of the Detroit River, in the vicinity of Brownstown, now Gibraltar.

On October 13th, 1812, the victory of Queenstown Heights was achieved, but unfortunately for Canada, her success was dearly purchased by the death of Brock, who fell, almost in the first stages of the action.

Col. Procter in the early part of January, 1813, having crossed the Detroit River from Amherstburg, and being again joined by the Indians under Tecumseh, totally routed the Americans under Brig.-Gen. James Winchester, who, with the greater portion of his army, was taken prisoner at River Basin, forty miles below Detroit, January 22nd, 1813. Turning upon Gen. Clay, he defeated him also, at the Battle of the Miami, May 5th, 1813, and would have captured Fort Meigs had he been assisted by the Indians as promptly as he had a right to expect.

After an unsuccessful attack upon Fort Stephenson, Aug. 1st, 1813, he recrossed the River at Amherstburg, and retired temporarily to Sandwich, leaving the Indians in the neighborhood of the former place.

On September 10th, 1813, was fought the naval battle of Lake Erie, in which the British fleet under Captain Robert Herriott Barclay, a veteran of the Nile and of Trafalgar, was defeated by the American squadron under Captain Oliver Hazard Perry, who captured every vessel and after the fight towed them into the harbor of Sandusky.

At this point it may perhaps be well to notice that although Perry is often spoken of as "Commodore," yet he held no such rank in the American navy. Isaac Chauncey was the commodore, and Perry's commission as post-captain only dates from the day of his victory over Barclay, namely, Sept. 10th, 1813.

Procter's frequent calls for reinforcements from headquarters on the Niagara fontier, where Major General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe commanded, were unheeded, (and in fact could not be spared), and thus he was compelled to undertake the arduous task of leading his diminutive force of 850 British and Canadians, besides a body of about a thousand Indians under Tecumseh, to a place where they might hope to make a successful stand against Harrison's army of 3,500 men, having first arranged with the Indians' chieftain that they should face the enemy at Chatham or Moravian Town. The loss of the fleet had deprived Procter (now Major-General) of the only means

of communication open to him with his friends on the Niagara frontier, except by the roads, if such they might be called, stretching along the Detroit and Thames rivers, and thence through the boggy forests away to the east.

Procter abandoned Amherstburg on Sept. 24th, 1813, and calling in the garrisons of Sandwich and Detroit as he proceeded, retreated as rapidly as circumstances would permit, closely followed by Harrison, who crossed the Detroit River at its mouth, and occupied Amherstburg only three days after the departure of Procter from that same place. Having been joined at Sandwich by his detachment of 1,500 Kentucky mounted riflemen under Governor Isaac Shelby, an old Revolutionary veteran, Harrison closely pursued Procter's worn-out and dispirited force, and reached a point on the north bank of the Thames, a mile and a half west of Movarian Town, on Oct. 5th, only two hours after the arrival of the British and their Indian allies at this same locality.

The British troops had received no pay for several months, and three gunboats and one brig, which accompanied the army as it marched along the banks of the aforesaid rivers, had to be destroyed, along with their cargoes, including the ammunition for the troops, to prevent their becoming the prizes of the swift-footed and exultant foe. Procter, too, was on bad terms with the rank and file of his army, and his knowledge of bushfighting was of the most meagre description, and between him and Tecumseh there was an entire lack of sympathy, without which in any case success need scarcely be even hoped for.

Thus when the handful of British troops, now reduced to 476 men through sickness, desertions and captures on the way, turned to face their enemy near Moravian Town, in the tall forest, thickly strewn with autumn leaves, on the afternoon of October 5th, 1813, the expressions used by many of them showed that they were ready to strike a last blow, but they instinctively felt that it was indeed to be the last. Many of our readers are already familiar with the details of this engagement, which lasted only about twenty minutes, terminating with Procter's defeat and the death of Tecumseh, who fell by the pistol shot of an officer of the Kentucky Mounted Infantry, while in the act of hurling his tomahawk at the already wounded horseman.

After this victory, which was followed up by a short pursuit of the remaining British, Harrison returned with his army to Detroit and finally withdrew to Lower Sandusky (now Freemont) with a view of assisting his friends in their projected invasion of the Niagara frontier, having left Lieut-Col. Anthony Butler in command of the garrison at Detroit. After another garrison had been placed at Amherstburg, the Kentucky troops

were marched home, and disbanded on Nov. 4th, 1813, and new levies were raised in that State for service on the Canadian frontier in the early part of February, 1814.

A large portion of Procter's little army, reduced in strength to 476 effective soldiers, and consisting of the 1st Battalion of the 41st Regiment together with thirty or forty members of the 10th Royal Veterans and twenty Light Canadian Dragoons, were taken prisoners, and for a time ignominously confined within the strong walls of a local penitentiary at Frankfort. Procter himself, having escaped with his family, his personal staff and the Dragoons, made considerable effort to rally his remaining troops after the battle, and was nearly taken prisoner in the pursuit that followed. Lieut. Richard Bullock of the 41st, with about fifty of his company, eluded the observation of the watchful foe by a rapid flight through the thick woods, and after many vicissitudes finally joined the wreck of Procter's command at Ancaster, about three weeks after the defeat at Moravian Town. This whole force now only numbered 246 troops, not including the Indians. Henceforth, we hear no more of Procter during the war, nor of the Right Division of the British army operating in Upper Canada, the remainder of which was now merged into the command of the Centre Division, under Col. (afterwards Maj.-Gen.) John Vincent, with headquarters at Burlington.

Shortly before the 1st of January, 1814, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Gordon Drummond established a small outpost of the Centre Division at Delaware, a little village upon the Thames, about thirty-four miles east of Moravian Town, and about twelve miles west of the site of the present City of London. This village then consisted of only a few straggling houses, and a saw mill close by. This force was stationed at this place for the purpose of acting as a corps of observation over and keeping in check the straggling bands of American Militia who were constantly harrassing the peaceful inhabitants of the London District. It comprised the Flank Companies of the Royal Scots, and a light company of the 89th Regiment, a detachment of Canadian (Kent) Militia, and a small body of Rangers, the whole being under the command of Captain Stewart, the full strength of which amounted to 196 men. Stewart was frequently obliged during the months of January and February to send out reconnoitering expeditions down the Thames, and even into the vicinity of Sandwich for the purpose of checking the desultory incursions of the enemy above referred to.

In order to act as a counterpoise to, and neutralize as far as possible the effect of the establishment of the British post at Delaware, Lieut.-Col. Butler, who still held command at Detroit,

established a similar post at McLear's, near Dolsen's Farm, on the banks of the Thames about two miles below where the city of Chatham now stands, at which station was placed a company of thirty-nine American regulars under Lieut. Larwell. The British having been apprised of the situation of this corps, Lieut. Medcalf with thirty-three regulars and militia marched through the woods from the Rond Eau and surprised it in the silent watches of the night (Dec. 23, 1813) capturing the whole party without loss of killed on either side, and only five Americans wounded.

Butler did not think proper to re-establish this post, but contented himself with sending out foraging expeditions from Detroit as before. In one of these incursions Captain Lee with a company of Michigan Rangers captured and carried off as prisoners Col. Baby, Capt. Springer, and several others of the Canadian Militia, who were most active in the defence of their country. Springer was the postmaster at Delaware, and an old U. E. Loyalist, having first seen the light of day near Albany in the State of New York, and after his removal to Canada became a Justice of the Peace, and during the war held the rank of captain in the Militia of Upper Canada. Springer's horses and sleigh were also taken on this occasion, the captain being tied down in the bottom of the box and in this manner conveyed to Kentucky, crossing the Detroit River on the ice. In a subsequent expedition, Lee also took and carried away into captivity Major Townsley of the same branch of the Canadian service. This individual was a native of Connecticut and another of that noble and heroic band who braving even death itself dared to be loyal to the old flag with its glorious traditions and take up arms to defend from invasion the fair and free soil of their adopted home. That he was a man of considerable merit seems to be established by the fact that his enemies characterize him as "the most active and vindictive partizan of the British in Upper Canada."

Butler, however, finding his hold upon the south-western portion of the province rather uncertain, determined to make an attack upon someone or other of the British posts in the interior, and by its capture and destruction rid himself of the repeated onsets from which his wild and turbulent foragers suffered at the hands of their stubborn and resolute foe. Accordingly on Feb. 21st, 1814, he resolved upon despatching Captain Andrew Hunter Holmes of the 24th U. S. (Tennessee) Infantry with a detachment from this regiment and also from those of the 26th Vermont, the 27th New York and the 28th Kentucky, together with two pieces of artillery. Holmes was directed to march against either Port Talbot or Delaware, as circumstances

would permit or the exigencies of the situation might require. At this time a period of comparative tranquility seemed to prevail, and since in consequence thereof Captain Stewart was not molested in his little post at Delaware and as the militia was no longer considered necessary to aid in its maintenance, he concluded to order it home.

However, as the sequel will show, this short season of apparent peace was more imaginary than real. Holmes, immediately upon receiving his instructions from his superior officer, set out from Amherstburg, and having reached Pointe au Pelee, found the roads between that place and the Rond Eau to be so much obstructed by fallen timber, deep snow, thickets and wet swamps, that he was obliged to abandon his guns at Pointe au Pelee, and trust to his small arms for the reduction of the British post at Port Talbot. The climate of this part of the country being less severe in winter than in the more northerly sections, the soil in the woods rarely freezes to such an extent as to allow the passage therein of such a relatively heavy load as a six pounder (the calibre of Holmes' guns) and in fact often makes insecure footing for a horse of ordinary weight.

Captain Gill with his company of Michigan Rangers, and Captain Lee with a troop of Michigan Militia Dragoons, having pursued some Canadian (Kent) Militia up the Thames under Lieut. McGregor, effected a junction with Holmes, at the Rond Eau, without serious obstruction, so that Holmes' total strength now numbered 180 men. He at once resumed his march for Port Talbot, but soon changed his determination upon hearing that his advance guard had fallen in with some Canadian militia, who he imagined would carry to Port Talbot the news of his coming, and then concluded to make an attempt to surprise Delaware. The settled conviction on the part of the British appeared to him to be that he intended avoiding Delaware and proceed to Port Talbot, which would in that event, leave his rear open to attack, so that for this reason, also, he concluded to abandon his intended expedition to the latter place, and make a sudden rush upon the former, as indeed by his instructions from Butler he was authorized to do. He therefore altered his route and directed his march towards Delaware. Having crossed the Thames a short distance below Moravian Town, he proceeded rapidly along the forest highway leading through the "Long Woods," a huge natural park extending from the site of the present village of Thamesville to Delaware, a distance of about thirty-seven miles and embracing within its woody domains an area of about 190,000 square acres.

Almost in the very heart of this dreary solitude, at that time, lived with his family a quaint and lonely individual named

George Ward, whose dwelling was known as "Ward's Station," and whose memory is practically immortalized in the designation of the present village of Wardsville. Whether for advance or for retreat, the by-path, for it was very little more, leading through this forest was such as the nicely gravelled and automobile imagination of the present day can scarcely be expected to clearly apprehend. The road, such as it was, followed in some places the northerly bank of the sluggish and winding Thames, and at others where cutting off bends, stretched at some distance from the river, when after passing east of where Wardsville now stands, the traveller finds himself entirely removed from the stream, until he reaches Delaware. The Townships of Mosa and Ekfrid were then unknown to geography, and the territory now embraced within the limits of these smiling municipalities was then occupied by wandering bands of Chippewa Indians. Neither was this region then a part of the present County of Middlesex, which, at this period of our history, included on the north bank of the Thames only the Township of London, while the remainder thereof lay on the opposite side of the river and embraced a large part of the lands now included within the limits of the County of Elgin, as it now exists.

Holmes' force, being nearly all mounted, traversed the sloughs of this unmitigated wilderness with wonderful celerity. The troops of which the invaders force was composed, and styled by American writers as "Mounted Infantry," were for the most part hunters, trappers and sportsmen, and, says Coffin, "inured to the wilderness, and between whom and the Indians there existed a constant warfare and deadly hatred. As we might expect in men leading wild and reckless lives, there existed among them confused and unconventional ideas as to the rights of personal property, combined with a marvellous tendency towards violating them. Supple and athletic, fearless, daring, sometimes vindictive, and frequently, chivalrous towards a conquered foe, arrayed in a hunting frock and leathern trousers fringed with tassels, they were trained to cover their bodies behind trees from which they fired, without exposing themselves to any greater extent than was really necessary. They were not cavalry as we understand the term, as not a man among them carried a sword, but simply a rifle, and for fighting at close quarters there were fastened to their belt the cruel knife and awful tomahawk. Thus the hardy pioneers of Kentucky and Tennessee presented an appearance at once formidable as well as picturesque. Their usual tactics were to follow up the enemy on horseback, and then dismounting from their docile steeds, step behind trees, and ply the unerring rifle. In the case of the roads being difficult for travel to footmen they often each took up one of them, be-

hind, on the backs of their trusty horses, and thus the march of the foot was greatly accelerated and a large stretch of country was in this way covered in a brief period of time.

These statements will now explain the rapid march of Holmes from Amherstburg to within fifteen miles of Delaware, and back to Fort Detroit. When Holmes reached a point in the woody and snow-covered bridle path "only fifteen miles from Delaware, on the 3rd inst., we received intelligence," he says in his report, "that the enemy had left Delaware with the intention of descending the river, and that we should probably meet him in one hour, that his force consisted of a light company from the Royal Scots, mustering for duty one hundred and twenty men, a light company from the 89th Regiment of foot (efficiency not known), Caldwell's Indians, and McGregor's militia, amounting in all to about 300 men." This information was evidently not given to Holmes by any of his own scouts, since, had this been the case, he would have thus informed his superior officer, as he was always quite anxious that his skill should be exhibited to the best advantage, when making his report to Butler. In speaking with reference to this very event, Armstrong says, "when arrived at fifteen miles of his object he was informed by a person not unfriendly to the United States that the fact of his approach was already known to Captain Stewart, the commandant of the post, who to meet it had collected a considerable force, which if he (Holmes) pursued his march on the Delaware road, he would in all probability soon encounter." Holmes seems therefore to have procured his information (which was nearly correct) respecting his opponents' force from a renegade Canadian. This person seems to have met Holmes in advance of the British, since, according to his own report, the American officer was told that the British force was probably within one hour's march of him. Not knowing the ground he at once retreated to what was then known as ""Twenty Mile Creek," so called from its being about twenty miles west of Delaware, this stream being also about three miles east of Ward's Station, and having re-crossed it on a bridge, took up an excellent position on its western bank, now known as "Battle Hill."

Captain Gill, with about twenty Michigan Rangers was left by Holmes to cover the retreat, and watch the movements of the pursuing Canadian Rangers, under Caldwell. Holmes' command had originally amounted to 180 men, but hunger, cold and fatigue had brought on illness, and although none had died, yet all were much disheartened, and sixteen were sent home since they were unable to withstand the hardships connected with this wearisome march, so that his total strength now numbered 164 men. The main body of the Americans had barely encamped

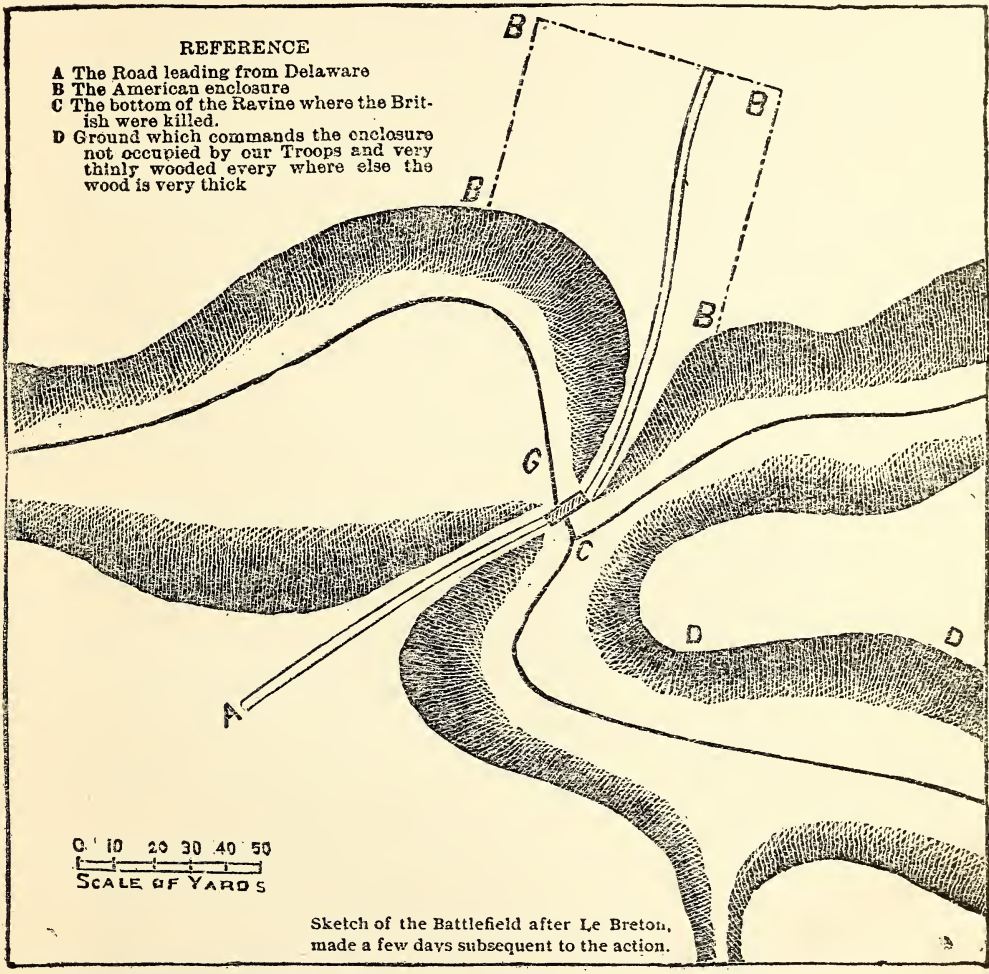
before it was joined by Gill with his American Rangers who had been driven in after exchanging a few shots with the Canadian Rangers who had vainly attempted to reconnoitre, although he was able to give the main body sufficient time to make good its retreat to Twenty Mile Creek. The remaining portion of the day and also the night were turned to good account by the American commandant. Disaffection had crept into the ranks of the invaders, and both officers and men loudly demanded that a retreat should be made still further, since many of them had suffered severely from fatigue and exposure, and alleged that others had been permitted to return home for these very same reasons. Holmes therefore was obliged to call a council of his officers to determine whether they should endeavor to maintain their present position, or retreat, and on this question there was considerable diversity of opinion. The Captain and his Adjutant, Ensign Heard, however, were strongly opposed to the latter alternative, and the impression finally prevailed that they should "conquer the British or perish in the attempt."

The strengthening of his position was then proceeded with, which was fortified by an abattis on three sides formed of logs, piled upon each other breast high, and faced on the outerside with brushwood. The portion of the hills looking immediately to the east, and over which the road crossed, was also slightly strengthened in the same way. These hills, besides being very steep, were covered with water, which was brought up from the creek during the night in no stinted draughts, and being quickly frozen into ice, owing to the intense cold, was then concealed by snow being thrown thereon, so that the American position, previously naturally strong, was now practically unassailable.

The Canadian Rangers spent the night of the 3rd on the plain to the rear of the eastern hills, between which and the American camp lay a rather deep valley through which from north to south flows the creek which finally empties itself into the Thames about a mile south from where the road, now known as the Longwoods Road, crosses the hills. Although the ground is now cleared away, and the forest trees no longer wave their massive branches over the hills, the creek and the ravine, still the western bank is yet an admirable location for defensive purposes, as against an enemy advancing from the east, and the American position was therefore well selected.

Stewart having received notification, late on the night of the third, from Captain William Caldwell that he had met with a party of Americans on that very day, sent Captain James Lewis Basden at daylight, on the morning of the fourth with the Regulars consisting of the companies previously mentioned, together with the company of the Kent Militia, under Lieut. McGregor,

and about forty Indians, Wyandots and Pottawattomies, acting as scouts, under Captain "Billy" Caldwell, a half-breed, to the support of the Rangers. Stewart himself was detained for several hours at Delaware, upon urgent business, with Col. Elliott, one of the survivors of Moravian Town, and not really expecting



Sketch of the Battlefield after Le Breton, made a few days subsequent to the action.

an action immediately, much to his subsequent regret was not present at the fight that followed. Being all on foot their march was necessarily laborious over the lightly crested snow, through which they broke at every step. On the right hand and on the left, as they passed along, rose the primeval, woods in which were

great beech and maple trees, mantled in dazzling sheets of snow, and Nature herself was enshrouded in funereal white, and except for the steady tramp of the troops, while they proceeded on their way the forest was as silent as the grave. At Twenty Mile Creek all was quiet, until the first dim redness tinged the eastern sky, and the hills and the woods grew visible in the morning light, when suddenly, the sound of arms was heard.

The Canadian Rangers, having risen from their wintry bed, were all alert, and after exchanging a few scattered, ineffective shots with the enemy, on the western hills, hastily retreated with the object of drawing the invaders from their strong position. This stratagem of inducing the Americans to leave their location on the opposite heights was well contrived, and had it been skillfully followed up could hardly have failed to effect the entire destruction of the enemy's force. Holmes, on discovering that the company of Canadian Rangers had disappeared, waited some time for their return, and then despatched Lieut. Knox with the Michigan Rangers to reconnoitre, and upon his return he reported that the Canadians had retreated with the utmost precipitation, leaving articles of baggage and camp furniture scattered about, and that judging from the number of fires, and the appearance of the trail, the strength of the enemy did not exceed sixty or seventy men.

The American commandant, displeased at the thought of his having retreated on the previous day from such a slender force, and assuming that he had been previously wrongly informed as to the real strength of his opponents, now abandoned his position on the western hills and commenced a close pursuit of the flying Canadains, intending to endeavor to capture Delaware before the end of the day. He, however, had not proceeded more than five miles, when Captain Lee of the Michigan Militia Dragoons, who was in advance of the main body, reported to him that the British and Canadians in considerable force were now arranging themselves in order of battle on ground of their own choosing; Caldwell, in the meantime, having been joined by the main body under Basden.

At this time the golden opportunity of making a flank movement through the woods, and thus cutting off the Americans from a retreat to Twenty Mile Creek, presented itself to Basden. In fact he was strongly urged to do this by those of his men who were familiar with the physical features of the locality, and particularly by the two Caldwells. But as he was by no means a strategist, he neglected doing so, and consequently lost his move in this game of military tactics. Had this been done, Holmes, in all probability, would have been driven towards Delaware or Port Talbot, and without forage or other supplies, placed between two

fires, in which case his entire command would have been either ultimately destroyed or compelled to surrender. Having taken advantage of Basden's blunder, he rapidly retreated and was thus finally enabled to resume his former position on the western bank of the creek, and at once began preparations for the struggle, notwithstanding the complaints of many of his men, who again strongly pressed him to retreat farther. Nor was this rapid retreat wtihout its effect upon the mind of Basden, who only saw in Holmes' swift movements, the effects of fear and a settled design on the part of his foeman to avoid a conflict.

The American troops being indifferently drilled, were formed in a hollow square, with the baggage and horses in the centre, in order to avoid the necessity of attempting military evolutions in action, which they were unable to perform. The brow of the west hill overhanging the creek, across which elevation stretched the road, was occupied by the detachment of the 24th Tennessee and 28th Kentucky, while those of the 26th Vermont and 27th New York defended the hills and the breastwork on the north side of the American position, the ravine here making a slight bend in a northwesterly direction, a very short distance beyond the north side of the road. The Michigan Rangers occupied a position on the west side of the square, while the Michigan Militia Dragoons stood on the south side of the American camp, the ravine here making another bend almost due south, as the waters of the creek rush onward and mingle with those of the Thames. These hills are all quite steep, and besides forming commanding eminences, about fifteen or twenty feet high, were fortified by long breastworks as above described.

Basden, then a young man of only twenty-nine years of age, like many others of the old school of British officers, believed that almost anything could be accomplished by dash and spirit, and that the enemy's entrenchments could be taken by storm, confidently expecting that he would thus be able to teach the Americans such a lesson that in the future they would positively desist from making any further foraging raids into Upper Canada. Had he been governed by prudence and judgment he would in all probability, have succeeded in doing so, but being as indiscreet as he was brave, he recklessly ordered a direct front attack, instead of, in the first instance, endeavoring to turn the enemy's flank, thus repeating and accentuating the mistake made by himself during the previous part of the day. The desultery skirmishes with the enemy, occuring in connection with the advance and retreat of the Americans previously alluded to, in conjunction with the great depth of snow, for it was fully fifteen inches deep, tended greatly to retard the advance of the British and Canadians, so that it was about five o'clock in the afternoon of

Friday, the 4th day of March, 1814, when they arrived on the eastern heights of the wide and deep ravine, through which Twenty Mile Creek discharges its waters. The company of Kent Militia under McGregor and the company of Canadian Rangers under Caldwell were instructed to make a flank movement up the valley, above the north side of the road, and upon the enemy's left where the detachments of the 26th and 27th were posted, and the Indians under Captain "Billy" Caldwell were dispatched to turn his right, where were stationed the Michigan Militia Dragoons and Rangers, while the British Regulars were to make an attack upon the centre of the American position defended by the detachments from the 24th and 28th.

Comparatively deadly work soon began. A more efficient corps for the flanking service to the left of the American position could scarcely have been selected from the whole irregular force in Upper Canada than this handful of men, fifty in number, led by McGregor and Caldwell, sheltering themselves behind trees as they noiselessly proceeded until they had passed up the ravine, under a heavy fire, to turn that portion of the invader's intrenchments, held by the soldiers of Vermont and New York, and then sounded their bugles, according to previous orders. The Indians, uttering their shrill war-cries, and also fighting from behind trees at a more respectful distance, engaged the right of the enemy, but owing to the fact that the latter had the advantage of an intrenched post, while the former fought from behind trees only, they were thus comparatively easily kept at bay.

It was, however, in the centre of the enemy's position where the struggle of the day took place. While the flanking movements were being made, the British Regulars commenced firing heavily upon the position held by the troops of Tennesee and Kentucky, these being the detachments from the 24th and 28th American Regulars. The foe, to the accompaniment of loud cries from the 28th of "Hurrah for Kentucky!" "Hurrah for Kentucky!" from their sheltered positions returned the fire with equal spirit and determination. Basden, putting himself at the head of the Royal Scots detachment, determined to try to carry by storm the main portion of the enemy's position, and for this purpose an advance was made from the eastern hills in double quick time, down a tongue of land sloping towards the western eminence, occupied by the 24th and 28th, and along which projection the road at that time ran, and being almost parallel with the southern limit of the modern highway. The road being exceedingly narrow the detachment was formed "into an open column of sections right in front," in which order it proceeded down the slope and over the bridge, which crossed the creek, being met at every step by a fire from the enemy posted on the

heights above, which decimated their ranks, but failed to dampen their glowing ardour. The hill upon which the 24th and 28th detachments had taken their position, "actually at this moment," says Thompson, "presented the appearance of a volcano belching forth cataracts of streaming fire, and dense columns of smoke; the air was filled with one continued roar of musketry, resembling the roar of a thousand drums, and as if to add a more terrific grandeur to the scene, the sun shot forth a few partial rays through the dense forest upon the conflicting parties," several of whom beheld this grand fountain of light, that afternoon, for the last time upon earth.

The detachment having passed the bridge which spanned the creek, advanced to the foot of the western hills and within fifteen or twenty paces of the enemy posted behind the breastwork on the brow of the hill, from which was still poured into their ranks a most destructive fire. Here another occurrence of greater moment and of much more appalling nature presented itself to the minds of the brave Regulars and filled them with apprehension, altogether unprepared, as they were, for such an event. The face of the western hill, covered with ice, almost as slippery as glass and concealed by a slight covering of snow, was found to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to climb. The enemy, screened behind the brow of the hill, discharging their fatal rifles with such startling effect as to practically destroy front section of their opponent's advance, and those who followed, says Holmes, "were much thinned and wounded" as the men of the 24th and 28th detachments, from their almost impregnable situation from above, fired volley after volley into the surging mass below.

Many were the brave attempts to overcome this unexpected natural obstacle, and reach the enemy's lines above. Basden himself, at the head of the foremost section, reached a point within three yards of the position held by the adversary, when a bullet, fired with fatal precision, laid him low, dangerously wounded in the upper part of the right thigh. As the invaders fought behind cover, few, if any of them, were struck during this vain but brave attempt of the British Regulars to carry the hill. The troops were therefore reluctantly obliged to abandon the charge and take refuge in diffused order behind trees at the bottom of the ravine, and at from twenty to thirty paces from the American line, and place their sole dependence upon the rifle.

This change of tactics, nevertheless, was largely neutralized from the fact that the enemy's regulars were now ordered to kneel upon the ground, so that the brow of the heights might protect them as far as possible from their opponents' view. The firing on both sides was still carried on with great vivacity. The

cover afforded the British by the trees, however, proved in many cases to be quite insufficient, by reason of their frequently standing in squads behind the same tree, while the enemy discharged their rifles upon them from an extended front. The crisis of the day, at all events, was now over. From the close and rapid firing of the enemy stationed upon the heights, and also from the favored nature of their situation, the British dared not uncover, and under the circumstances, a second charge up the hill was entirely out of the question. On the right flank of the enemy, the Indian attack was from the beginning necessarily weak, although they fought from behind trees, yet owing to the protected character of their antagonists' position, and the inherent inability of the red man to make any such attack as the circumstances of this particular case required, the American lines were at this point also incapable of being carried. On the enemy's left flank, however, the Canadian Rangers and Militia were on the point of scaling the invaders' works, when, through the failure of the front attack by the Regulars, and not being properly supported in consequence thereof, they were also repulsed.

Unable to sustain the unequal conflict, and favored also by the fast approaching shades of night, the British, amid repeated shouts of "Hurrah for Kentucky!" from the detachment of the 28th still ringing in their ears, withdrew, after a close and gallant contest extending over a period of an hour and a half.

Ensign Mills of the 89th, upon whom the command devolved after the fall of Basden, wrote from the field just after the conclusion of the fight to Captain Stewart and handed his letter giving a few details of the fight to him. It will be remembered that Stewart was detained at Delaware and only arrived at the field near the conclusion of the action. In his letter, among other things, Mills says, "I have the satisfaction to assure you that every man did his duty, and that we retired in perfectly good order." On the day following the engagement (March 5th) Stewart wrote to Maj.-Gen. Riall, who was afterwards taken prisoner at the battle of Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, a brief account of this action, and enclosed Ensign Mills' letter. After having concluded his business at Delaware, Stewart hurried through the forest towards Twenty Mile Creek, and reached Battle Hill just previous to the close of the action, and on the following morning wrote Riall to the above effect, from a place where a stream crosses the Longwoods Road in the present Township of Ekfrid, adjacent to where the present Loop Line of the Grand Trunk Railway also intersects the aforesaid road.

The losses of the British in this action were considerable, taking into account the number of men engaged, and amounted in all to 14 killed, 52 wounded (six of whom died within one week

after the action) and one missing. Volunteer Piggett who had joined the detachment of the 89th only a few days before this action, besides being wounded was also taken prisoner. The detailed account of British losses is as follows:

1. Royal Scots Flank Company—Captain D. Johnson and nine rank and file, killed; Lieut. A. McDonald, three sergeants, thirty-one rank and file, wounded, and one bugler missing.

2. 89th Light Company—Lieut. P. Graeme and three rank and file, killed; Captain Basden, one sergeant and seven rank and file, wounded; Volunteer Piggett taken prisoner.

3. Kent Militia and Rangers—Lieut. John McGregor, Sergeant John Coll and five rank and file, wounded.

No account seems to have been taken of any killed or wounded among the Indians.

The losses of the invaders, owing to their having fought from a sheltered position, only amounted to four killed and three wounded, including a non-commissioned officer. Says Kingsford, "Although great gallantry was shown in the attack, it was most ill-judged, and led to the serious casualties already narrated, with no prospect of success." The American Commandant forbore to pursue the British when they retired from the fatal ravines and over the eastern hills, as he was well aware that should he do so the same advantage of position would then accrue to them which had that afternoon been so highly beneficial to himself. Had he advanced into the ravine from his position on the western hills he would in all probability have been caught by the British in the identical trap in which they themselves had such hurtful experience only an hour or so previously, and of which they would in that event be very likely to make good use, especially as the creek could only be crossed by means of the same bridge over which the gallant Regulars had passed so lately were he to commence a pursuit by means of mounted troops. Moreover, his soldiers being greatly fatigued and frost-bitten, and their shoes cut to pieces by the frozen ground, he was unable on this account, also to follow up his foes on foot.. The above reasons given by this clever officer for not pursuing the British and taking advantage of his victory, seem at first sight to savor rather of the nature of excuses than reasons, yet taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case there is much to be said in favor of his conclusions. The British force engaged in this action amounted to 240 men, composed of the following corps:

Royal Scots Flank Company ..... 101 men
89th Regiment Light Company ..... 45 men
Militia and Rangers ..... 50 men

Indians ..... 44 men

Total .....240 men

The whole American strength engaged in this conflict numbered one hundred and sixty-four men, computed as follows:

Regulars ..... 94 men
Rangers and Militia Dragoons ..... 70 men

Total .....164 men

The latter had, however, the inestimable advantage of a superior location, together with an excellent knowledge of bush fighting, which threw the possibilities as well as the probabilities of success into their hands from the very beginning of the action. The great inequality of loss in this fight is therefore to be attributed to the judicious position chosen by Holmes (or rather chosen by the renegade Canadian who, according to tradition, selected it for him and also suggested pouring water on the face of the hill to make ice), who compelled Basden to attack him at a very great disadvantage; and this very event of itself, we are assured by one writer, more than his bravery deserves the reward of success. "Possessing also the advantage of dress which renders him undistinguishable to the eye of a foeman, the American backwoodsman enters into a contest with the British Regular, whose glaring uniform and shining accoutrements are objects too conspicuous to be missed, while his utter ignorance of a mode of warfare in which courage and discipline are completely worthless, renders the struggle for mastery still more unequal." Holmes states that he behaved very humanely towards the killed and wounded British, not even allowing his men to remove the shoes from off the feet of the slain although many of his own men were then marching in their stocking feet. He also gives special credit, in his report to Lieut.-Col. Butler, for their services in this contest to Lieutenants Knox and Henry of the 28th Kentucky and Jackson and Potter of the 24th Tennessee detachments, as well as Captain Lee of the Michigan Militia Dragoons. Sailing-Master Darling, who had upon setting out on this expedition, volunteered to command the artillery which was subsequently abandoned at Pointe au Pelee, is also thanked for the part he took in this engagement. He likewise expresses his gratitude to Ensign Heard of the 28th for his services in connection with this victory. Heard acted as Holmes' adjutant and rendered him valuable assistance at the conference of officers, on the night previous to the fight, concerning the advisability of a retreat or a contest with the foe.

Holmes was, however, well aware that, notwithstanding his success at "Battle Hill," his prospects for the capture of either

Delaware or Port Talbot were now more remote than ever, since a superior force—although a lately beaten one—lay between him and either of these places, and he could not hope for a blunder like Basden's to be repeated. He therefore began a rapid march from the field at Twenty Mile Creek at nine o'clock on the evening of this action of Friday, March 4th 1814, and reached Detroit, a distance of about ninety miles from the scene of his late conflict, in time to allow Butler to make a short report of the fight to Major-General Harrison, under date of March 7th, which report was transmitted to headquarters through Lieut. Shannon of the 27th New York.

It will thus be seen that Holmes felt ill at ease while a single mile intervened between his command and the palisaded fort on the American side of the Detroit River. Under date March 10th he issued a much fuller report of action to Butler, which was afterwards forwarded to Harrison. In speaking of this expedition, says Gen. Armstrong "it may be enough to say, that having a worthless object, and inadequate means, it ought not to have been adopted, for of what importance to the United States would have been the capture or destruction of a blockhouse in the heart of the enemy's country, more than one hundred miles distant from our frontier, and which, if held would have been difficult to sustain, and if destroyed, easily reinstated."

On the day following the engagement, the British detachments, after having definitely ascertained by a flank movement through the woods north of the road that the enemy had disappeared, resumed their former position at Delaware, which was more than once raided during the continuance of the war.

On March 7th Stewart received a communication from Riall requesting him to retreat from Delaware in consequence of a report, which subsequently turned out to be incorrect, that a body of 500 Americans were now advancing up the Thames for the purpose of making an attack upon the post. On the 10th Stewart and the regulars arrived at the Village of Oxford, now Oxford Centre, leaving the Rangers under Caldwell a short distance from where the City of London now stands.

The ground upon which this conflict took place is now known as south half of lot seven, in the first range north of the Longwoods Road, in the Township of Mosa, and County of Middlesex, and the north half of lot seven, in the first range south of Longwoods Road in the same township. The former lands were granted by the Crown to the late David Conradt by patent bearing date the 3rd day of November, 1830, and the latter were also granted by Crown patent to the late Jeremiah Grey on the 22nd day of July, 1831.

Formerly pieces of old muskets, rifles, military buttons,

bullets and other reminders of an age of strife, were from time to time picked up on the scene of this forest conflict at Battle Hill. These finds, however, became rarer and rarer as time passed on, until now they have, to all intents and purposes, ceased to have existence, notwithstanding the efforts of the modern relic hunter. The late Jeremiah Grey, of whom mention has just been made, ploughed up at the edge of the creek in the ravine, about the year 1870, the skeleton of some poor long-forgotten victim of Basden's wild charge up the western heights. Some time previous to this discovery, the bones of another soldier, (evidently an American) were disinterred in the sandfield, just in the rear of the position occupied by the 24th and 28th detachments of the invader's force on that bleak afternoon of Friday, the 4th day of March, 1814.

Local tradition did not neglect, for many years, to throw a weird mantle over many occurrences connected with this fight in the woods, and invest them with a halo of romance, the product of entirely too fruitful imaginations to be of any value for historical accuracy. In the case of the battles of Tours and Poitiers (732), and of Bannockburn (1314), and also of many others, the inhabitant of the locality would gravely inform the passing traveler that by night would be heard the neighing and tramping of horses, the clash of arms, the groans of the wounded, the shrieks of the dying and the shouts of the combatants. We are also told that in the instance of Battle Hill during the years now past and gone would be dimly seen the ghosts of the slain, silently flitting over the hills in the small, quiet hours of darkness, warning the living against disturbing the repose of the dead, and frightening the more timid against invading their dread mysterious haunts; all of which sounds strangely like the story of the fabled Giant of the Canary Islands.

Beautiful tales of treasure buried at the time of the conflict in this forest, and subsequently recovered by means of a map showing its whereabouts, have also been related, and in truth committed to writing, regardless of the fact that the troops who fought at Twenty Mile Creek had no treasure to bury. This last remark, I think, suggests the question: What would a corps of Whites and Indians, numbering only 240 men, and marching out from Delaware to fight an enemy whom they might meet at almost any moment, be doing with treasure? Would it not be left at Delaware, or better still, at headquarters on Burlington Heights? Inasmuch as the British force sent out from Delaware for a mere temporary purpose intended to return to the same place after having fought the enemy, it seems scarcely reasonable to suppose that treasure would be carried along with it, be encumbered thereby, and then carried back to

Delaware. In fact it may be added that the story of the treasure buried at Battle Hill, and afterwards recovered by means of a chart seems to be borrowed largely from the narrative of the search, through the same instrumentality, for the long lost hoard of the Inca, Atahualpah, one of the last native sovereigns of the ancient empire of Peru, with just sufficient imaginative coloring applied thereto, as would give the tale a local application to this particular case. The writer once remembers being shown where search was made for the army chest of Procter, hidden after his defeat at Moravian Town. As a matter of history he had no army chest to hide. But the prodigality of the human imagination is as boundless and unlimited as immensity itself. The fierce light of modern intelligence is nevertheless fast dispelling and scattering to the winds all such popular illusions and consigning them to their proper place in the regions of a buried and forgotten past.

The muse of history has time and again sung the praises of the courageous and unsuccessful assault made by the soldiers of Pickett's Brigade of the Confederate army upon Cemetery Hill, the key to the Federal position, on the last day of the fierce battle of Gettysburg, July 3rd, 1863. She has been equally loud in her commendations of the gallant charge of the British troops upon the rocky precipices of Spion Kop during the late war in South Africa, and which has become familiar to nearly every person living throughout the length and breadth of our land. But it may be said, and in fact repeated, that within the limits of the County of Middlesex to-day there are not perhaps a dozen individuals familiar with the correct official accounts of this equally brave and daring attack upon the icy snow-clad heights at Battle Hill on the cold winter's afternoon of Friday, the 4th day of March, 1814.

Canadians, as a rule, make no boast of their loyalty any more than they do of the other manly virtues which they quite properly claim to be their national characteristics. The hillsides overshadowing the ravine at Twenty Mile Creek are the monuments of the gallant dead reposing beneath their shades; their names and the heroic efforts which they made at this place and set forth in the pages of history are the inscriptions recorded thereon. Even at this date can we not, by copying the lessons set so admirably before us by other sister societies, place a simple memorial here, commemorating the heroic death at Battle Hill of Captain Johnston and Lieutenant Graeme, as well as the other brave and unnamed regulars who died that Canada might live and our glorious heritage of freedom be preserved to us throughout the succeeding ages. The hand would surely wither which could desecrate that stone.

APPENDIX A.

Adjutant-General's Office, Quebec, 10th March, 1814—

General Orders.

His Excellency, the commander of the forces, has received from Lieut.-General Drummond, the report of Captain Stewart of the Royal Scots, of an affair which took place between the detachment under the orders of that officer and a body of the enemy, on the 4th inst., at Longwood, in advance of Delaware town.

Captain Stewart reports that receiving a report late on the night of the 3rd inst., from Captain Caldwell that a party of the enemy had been seen in Long Wood, he directed the Flank Companies of the Royal Scots and the Light Company of the 89th Regiment, under the immediate command of Captain Basden, 89th Regiment, to march at daybreak to the support of Captain Caldwell; and at five o'clock in the evening the enemy was discovered in very superior force, posted on a commanding eminence, strongly intrenched with log breastworks; this post was instantly attacked in the most gallant manner by the flanked companies in front, while Captain Caldwell's company of Rangers and a detachment of the Loyal Kent Militia made a flank movement to the right, and a small band of Indians to the left, with a view of gaining the rear of the position, and after repeated efforts to dislodge the enemy, in an arduous and spirited contest of an hour and a half duration, which terminated with the daylight, the troops were reluctantly withdrawn, having suffered severely, principally in officers. The enemy has since abandoned his position in Longwood.

List of the wounded, killed and missing:

Royal Scots Light Company—1 captain, 9 rank and file, killed; 1 lieutenant, 3 sergeants, 31 rank and file, wounded; 1 bugler, missing.

89th Light Company—1 lieutenant, 3 rank and file, killed; 1 captain, 1 sergeant and 7 rank and file, wounded; Volunteer Piggott wounded and taken prisoner.

Loyal Kent Volunteers—1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant and 5 rank and file, wounded.

Names of officers killed and wounded:

Captain D. Johnston, Royal Scots, and Lieutenant P. Graeme, 89th Regiment, killed; Captain Basden, 89th Regiment, and Lieutenant A. McDonald, Royal Scots, wounded.

(Author's Note—Lieut. John McGregor, Loyal Kent Volunteers, wounded, and thereby lost an arm, and Sergeant John Call, also wounded. Of the wounded, above set forth, six died within a week afterwards. John Shaw, William Shaw and John

Mitchell, all members of the Kent Volunteers, were among the wounded, and William Shaw was one of those who died of wounds.)

Ensign Mills to Captain Stewart.

Longwood, March 4th, 1814.

I beg to acquaint you that this afternoon about five o'clock, the party commanded by Captain Basden of the 29th Regiment came up with the enemy in force of nearly 500 men and, after an action of an hour and a half, in which I am concerned to state our loss is very considerable, the troops were withdrawn in consequence of the great superiority of the enemy's number. I have the satisfaction to assure you every man did his duty, and that we retired in perfect good order. I have the honor to be, Sir, etc., etc.

J. Mills, Ensign, 89th Light Company.

Captain Stewart, Royal Scots.

Captain Stewart to Major-General Riall.

Fourteen Mile Creek, March 5th, 1814.

Sir:—Having received a report from Captain Caldwell late on the night of the 3rd, stating that he had fallen in with a party of the Americans that day in his advance through the Long Wood, the flank companies of the Royals and 89th Regiment moved early yesterday morning to his support, and at five o'clock in the afternoon came up with them, who were posted on a commanding eminence, strongly intrenched by a log breastwork; they were instantly most gallantly attacked in front by the two companies of the Royal and 89th. At the same time the Kent Militia and Captain Caldwell's company of Rangers made a flank movement to the right, and a small party of Indians to the left, to gain the rear of the enemy's position, and after repeated efforts to dislodge them without effect, the troops were most reluctantly withdrawn.

I regret that our loss is very considerable. I enclose a letter from Ensign Mills of the 89th Regiment, who remained in command of the troops in this affair, every other officer being killed or wounded. I was detained at Delaware several hours after the movement of the two companies, making arrangements with Colonel Elliott of the Indian department for a particular service in which the Indians were to be employed, which I regret prevented my joining the troops till the close of the action. Information is just received that the Americans have retreated from

their position. I herewith enclose a return of the killed and wounded and missing.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

A. STEWART,

Capt. R. Scots, Lieut.-Col., London District.

Major-General Riall, etc., etc.

York, March 9th, 1814.

Sir:—I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency the copy of a report received from Major-General Riall from Captain Stewart of the Royal Scots Light Company, relative to an affair which took place in advance of Delaware Town between the detachment under his orders and a body of the enemy from the westward.

I regret to state that our loss has been considerable in proportion to the numbers engaged, and that notwithstanding the daring gallantry displayed on the occasion, finding it impracticable to dislodge the enemy from the security of his breastwork, the troops were reluctantly withdrawn, after an action of an hour and a half. It is reported that the enemy have since retired from their position.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

GORDON DRUMMOND, Lieut.-Gen.

Captain Basden to Captain Stewart.

Oxford, March 13th, 1814.

Sir:—I take the earliest opportunity, being a little recovered, to inform you of the circumstances which took place on the 4th inst. for the early information of Major General Riall, commanding the right division of the army.

Having on the evening of the 3rd received your orders to march the next morning, I paraded in consequence and received further directions, viz., to move forward, support Capt. Caldwell's detachment, and push on as far as Ward's with the whole. I moved on, found Capt. Caldwell with the whole of his party at the Fourteen Mile Creek. He had seen the enemy that morning in numbers, supposed 150 or 200, drawn up in an irregular column, about 5 or 6 miles from his present position (the Fourteen Mile Creek). I here refreshed the men and waited a very long time in expectation of some Indians (conceiving that a party was following me, five only arrived), and it growing late in the day I proceeded, leaving Mr. Fraser of the Indian department

with orders to hurry on such Indians as might come up. On approaching the place where the enemy had been before seen, it was observed by the smoke and some noise that they were occupying the same ground. I therefore made my dispositions for an immediate attack, it growing late. They were posted on the opposite side of a ravine, on a high bank close to the road, and I thought I could perceive a slight brush wood fence thrown up, as I presumed, to obstruct the road. The Kent Volunteers with the Rangers, I directed to file through the woods, to my left (right?), and by making an extensive circle they were to post themselves in the rear of the enemy, get as near as possible, not to fire a shot, but to sound a bugle, whenever the position was properly secured and they were prepared to advance. Mr. Fraser now arrived with about 23 Indians. These I stationed to flank my right (left?), and advance with the main body. At the sound of the bugle the flank companies moved on in open column of sections (the 89th Light Company being weak in subdivisions) led by the Royals, with an advance from them. The enemy commenced their fire immediately on our appearance, and when the head of the column had preceded a short distance down the hill, the firing from the enemy was so severe as to occasion a check, they instantly cheered and rushed on, making for the road on the opposite side, with the intention of carrying this fence. However, this was found impossible, the ascent being so steep and slippery. I now desired the men to follow me, and I moved in the ravine to the right, for some distance under an uncommon fire. On ascending and gaining the top of the bank, I was very much surprised to observe another face of a work. I placed the men in extended order under cover of the trees, and the action was kept up with great vigor till dusk, when that of the enemy became very feeble. I now determined to send to the point on the top of the hill (from where the action commenced) for more men to strengthen the party I had then with me, and on their arrival to strain the enemy's position agreeable to my first intention. At the instant I received a severe wound in the thigh, and was under the necessity of going to the rear; before I had proceeded far the enemy's fire had ceased—at this period only I received your orders to retire which order I forwarded to the officer commanding on the field. A few minutes after I met yourself. I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your very humble obedient servant,

JAS. L. BASDEN, Capt. 89th Reg.

Capt. Stewart, Royal Scots, Com'g, etc., etc.
(C 682-p 236)

Captain Basden's Report Reviewed.

Basden's letter to Stewart, read between the lines, seems to be apologetic and wanting in spirit, and apparently is quite as remarkable for what it actually omits as for what it really contains. Colonel Le Breton, in writing from Delaware under date of March 8, 1814, regarding this fight says: "As the report of our unfortunate and truly lamentable expedition has reached the General (Riall), you are no doubt acquainted with the circumstances, shall therefore forebear making any comments," evidently thought that the least said about the fight would be the best for all parties concerned. Basden's previous experience in Bengal and among the Mahrattas, at that period seems to have unfitted him to carry through successfully such a mission as the one in question herein. His refusal to accept the counsel tendered him by the two Caldwells, to make a wide flanking tour through the woods instead of attacking the enemy in front, prepared the way for the subsequent disaster that followed. He only mentions twenty-eight Indians as being attached to his force, while all the other authorities give a relatively, considerably larger number. Volunteer Piggott, who was present in the action, says they numbered from forty to sixty. The best authorities say that the total force under Basden was 240 men, and as from various sources we know the exact number of Regulars, Rangers and Militia taking part in this action, and subtracting the sum total of these from the grand total of the fighting force we thus arrive at the number of Indians as 44, which practically agrees with Piggott's statement.

He flatly contradicts the British official report of this action, wherein is set forth the fact that the Militia and Rangers were stationed to the right of the Regulars and the Indians to the left, whereas Basden's satement is exactly to the contrary effect. Holmes also contradicts both Basden and the British general orders, when he says that both the Indians and the Militia were stationed on the right, or rather, "across the ravine above the road," which conveys exactly the same meaning. Capt. Stewart's letter to Major-General Riall, bearing date March 5th, 1814, the day after the action, precisely agrees with the general orders in stating that the Militia and Rangers were stationed on the right of the Regulars, and the Indians on the left, and thus contradicts both Holmes and Basden. As before mentioned, Holmes also disagrees with Basden when he says that both the Militia and Indians were placed "across the ravine above the road," which indicates that they were both on the right of the Regulars, whereas Basden states that only the Indians were on the right of the Regulars, and the Militia on the left thereof. Holmes, under the term "Militia" includes both Rangers and Militia,

while the British and Canadian authorities clearly exhibit a difference between Militia and Rangers. Basden's letter is written on March 13th, 1814, while he was yet lying ill through his severe wound. A sick man, painfully wounded as Basden was, is not likely to remember past events as clearly as another person, having his faculties completely unimpaired. Stewart, too, arrived at the scene of the action just before its close, and therefore was as well informed under any circumstances as Basden could possibly be, and his report is written on the day following the action, whereas Basden's letter was not written until nine days afterwards. The whole tone of this report appears to be apologetic, rather than explanatory, although, of course, incidentally, a considerable number of interesting details are exhibited therein.

The flanking movement of which he speaks, is by no means, the one which he was previously counselled to make. The one in question was made simultaneously with the direct front attack, whereas he was previously urged to make a wide turning movement to the right from Fourteen Mile Creek and thus prevent Holmes from ever reaching his old position on the Western hills at Twenty Mile Creek (Battle Hill). The flank movement first above referred to was made too late to be of any practical value to Basden, and thus the attainment of the proposed object entirely depended upon the success of the front attack to be made by the Regulars upon the main position of the Americans. The Regulars were unable to succeed in this attack in front and thus the whole plan of action egregiously failed, largely through the slippery condition of the hills upon the summit of which the enemy was posted. He, like Holmes, says nothing about water having been poured upon the face of the western hills by the enemy to make ice, but notes its slippery condition. Thompson, however, who was one of the Royal Scots, mentions this very fact and this is also abundantly corroborated by local tradition. The loss of the fight is therefore to be attributed to the failure of the front attack from the above mentioned cause, rather than to the fact of his severe wound, upon which he seems to lay altogether too much stress, in trying to account for his defeat. To do him justice, he seems, however, to have profited in after years from the drastic lesson, taught him at Battle Hill. He gives no details of the relative strength of the opposing parties, and reminds Stewart that the troops retreated through the giving of orders to that effect by that officer. Stewart could not possibly order otherwise, seeing the false position in which Basden had placed the troops. He refers to Geo. Ward's dwelling in the woods, which places beyond doubt, chronologically, what

the family tradition states about his living on the present site of Wardsville, at least as early as the war.

APPENDIX B.

Letter from Captain Holmes to Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, Commanding at Detroit, and Transmitted to the Department of War by General Harrison.

Fort Covington, March 10th, 1814.

Sir:—I have the honor to submit in writing, that the expedition sent under my command against the enemy's posts by your special orders of the 21st ultimo, had the good fortune on the 4th inst. to meet and subdue a force double its own, fresh from the barracks, and led by a distinguished officer. I had been compelled to leave the artillery, by the invincible difficulties of the route from Point Au Plait to the Round O. No wheel carriage of any kind had ever attempted it before and none will ever pass it until the brush and fallen timber are cut away and the swamp causewayed or drained. After joining Capt. Gill I began the march for Fort Talbot, but was soon convinced of its being impossible to reach the fort in time to secure any force which might be there or adjacent. This conviction, united with the information that the enemy had a large force at Delaware upon the Thames, that I should be expected at Fort Talbot, and consequently that a previous descent upon Delaware might deceive the foe, and lead him to expose to me some point in defending others he might think menaced, and coupled with the possibility that hearing of Capt. Gill's march to the Round O, by McGregor's militia, whom he had pursued, a detachment had descended the Thames to intercept him, determined me to exercise the discretion allowed by the order, and to strike at once upon the river.

On the 3rd inst., when only fifteen miles from Delaware we received intelligence that the enemy had left Delaware with the intention of descending the river and that we should probably meet him in one hour; that his force consisted of a light company from the Royal Scots, mustering for duty one hundred and twenty men; a light company from the 89th Regiment of foot (efficiency not known); Caldwell's Indians and McGregor's militia; amounting in all to about three hundred men. My command had not originally exceeded one hundred and eighty in rank and file. Hunger, cold and fatigue had brought on disease, and though none had died, all were exceedingly depressed, and sixteen had been ordered home as unable to continue the march. I resolved therefore to avoid conflict on equal grounds and

immediately retreated five miles for the sake of a good position, on the western bank of Twenty Mile Creek, leaving Gill, with twenty Rangers to cover the retreat, and to watch the enemy's motions. We had camped but a few minutes, when Capt. Gill joined, after exchanging shots with the enemy's advance in vainly attempting to reconnoitre his force. The Twenty Mile Creek runs from north to south, through a deep wide ravine, and of course is flanked east and west by lofty heights. My camp was formed upon the western heights. The enemy's upon the opposite. During the night of the 3rd all was quiet. At sunrise on the 4th, the enemy appeared thinly upon the opposite heights, fired upon us without effect, and vanished. After waiting some time for their reappearance, Lieut. Knox of the Rangers was sent to reconnoitre. Upon his return, he reported the enemy had retreated to the utmost precipitation, leaving his baggage scattered upon the road, and that his trail and fires made him out not more than seventy men. Mortified at the supposition of having retrograded from this diminutive force, I instantly commenced the pursuit, with the design of attacking Delaware before the opening of another day. We did not, however, proceed beyond five miles, when Capt. Lee, commanding the advance, discovered the enemy in considerable force, arranging himself for battle. The symptoms of fear and flight were now easily traced to the purpose of seducing me from the heights and so far the plan had succeeded, but the enemy had failed to improve the advantage. If he had thrown his chief force across the ravine above the road, and occupied our camp when reliquished, thus obstructing my communication to the rear, I should have been driven upon Delaware against a superior force, since found to be stationed there, or forced to take the wilderness for Fort Talbot, without forage or provisions. Heaven averted this calamity. We soon regained the position at Twenty Mile Creek, and though the Rangers were greatly disheartened by the retreat, and to a man insisted upon not fighting the enemy, we decided an exhibit to that spot a scene of death or victory.

I was induced to adopt the order of a hollow square, to prevent the necessity of evolution, which I knew all the troops were incompetent to perform in action. The detachments of the 24th and 28th infantry occupied the brow of the heights. The detachment from the garrison at Detroit formed the north front of the square, the Rangers the west, the Militia the south. Our horses and baggage stood in the centre. The enemy threw his Militia and Indians across the ravine above the road and commenced action with savage yells and bugles sounding from the north, west and south. His regulars at the same time charged down the road from the opposite heights,

crossed the bridge, charged up the heights we occupied within twenty steps of the American line, and against the most destructive fire. But his front section was shot to pieces. Those who followed were much thinned and wounded. His officers were soon cut down, and his antagonists continued to evince a degree of animation that bespoke at once their boldness and security. He therefore abandoned the charge, and took cover in the woods at diffused order, between fifteen, twenty and thirty paces of our line, and placed all hope upon his ammunition.

Our regulars being uncovered, were ordered to kneel, that the brow of the heights might partly screen them from the enemy's view. The firing increased on both sides with great vivacity. But the crisis was over. I knew the enemy dared not uncover, and of course no second charge would be attempted. On the north, west and south front the fire had been sustained with much coolness, and with considerable loss to the foe. Our troops on these fronts being protected by logs hastily thrown together, the enemy not charging, both the rifle and musket were aimed at leisure, perhaps always told. The enemy at last became persuaded that Providence had sealed the fortune of the day. His cover on the east front was insufficient; for as he had charged in column of sections, and therefore, when dispersing on either side of the road, was unable to extend his flanks, and as our regulars presented an extended front from the beginning, it is evident that a common sized tree could not protect even one man, much less the squads that often stood and breathed their last together; and yet upon his regulars the enemy relied for victory. In concert therefore, and favored by the shades of twilight he commenced a general retreat after one hour's close and gallant conflict.

I did not pursue for the following reasons: 1. We had triumphed against numbers and discipline, and were therefore under no obligation of honor to incur additional hazard. 2. In these requisites (numbers and discipline) the enemy were still superior, and the night would have insured success to ambuscade. 3. The enemy's bugle sounded close upon the opposite heights. If then we pursued, we must have passed over him as he did to us, because the creek could not be passed on horseback at no other point, and the troops being fatigued and frostbitten, their shoes cut to pieces by frozen ground, it was not possible to pursue on foot. It follows, that the attempt to pursue would have given the enemy the same advantage that produced the defeat.

Our loss in killed and wounded amounted to a non-commissioned officer and six privates; with the blood of between eighty and ninety brave Englishmen, and among them four officers,

avenged their fall. The commander, Capt. Basden, of the 89th, is supposed to have been killed at an early stage of the contest. The whole American force in action consisted of one hundred and fifty rank and file, of whom seventy were militia, including the Rangers. The enemy's regulars alone were from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty strong, and his militia and Indians fought upon three fronts of our square.

I am much indebted to all my regular officers, and I trust their names will be mentioned to the army and to the War Department. Without intending a discrimination it must be acknowledged that the exertions of Lieut. Knox and Henry of the 28th and Jackson and Potter of the 24th were most conspicuous because fortune had opposed them to the main strength of the foe. Capt. Lee of the Michigan Dragoons was of great assistance before the action at the head of the advance and spies; and my warmest thanks are due to the acting sailing-master Darling, of the United States schooner Summers, who had volunteered to command the artillery. Ensign Heard of the 28th, acting as a volunteer adjutant, merits my acknowledgments, and especially for his zeal in defending my opinion against a final retreat, when others permitted their hopes to sink beneath the pressure of the movement.

The enemy's wounded and prisoners were treated with the utmost humanity. Some of our men were marching in their stockinged feet, but they were not permitted to take a shoe even from the dead.

I have the honor, to be with perfect respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) A. H. HOLMES, Captain 24th Infantry.

Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, commanding the Territory of Michigan and its dependencies.

Captain Holmes' Report Reviewed.

In speaking of his reasons for changing his route from Port Talbot to Delaware when he arrived at the Rond Eau Holmes' report is so confused that it is difficult, if not almost impossible to arrive at his real meaning. Fortunately General Armstrong and others throw light on this point, and plainly tell us that Holmes concluded that McGregor, who had been pursued up the Thames by Captain Lee, would very probably carry the news to Port Talbot of the coming of the enemy and thus throw the British and Canadians upon the alert. Holmes calls Port Talbot, "Fort Talbot."

Farther on he says, "On the 3rd inst., when only fifteen miles from Delaware, we received intelligence that the enemy had left

Delaware, with the intention of descending the river, and that we should probably meet him in one hour," etc. He evidently now refers to the Canadian Rangers under Caldwell, who formed an advance guard of the British force. It will be remembered that Caldwell, in his advance through the woods, discovered the proximity of the Americans, word of which he sent to Captain Stewart at Delaware, which information reached the latter late on the night of the 3rd. Holmes does not state how he got information of the British movements, of their strength, and the different detachments of which it was composed. Had it been through his own scouts, he would not likely have left us in the dark on this point. Armstrong plainly states that this information was given "by a person not unfriendly to the United States." He clearly sees Basden's blunder in not outflanking him, on the 4th, after he had been drawn from his advantageous position at Twenty Mile Creek by Caldwell, earlier in the day. He estimates his fighting strength, in one part of his report, somewhat below what other contemporary American authorities say it was, in another part of this same report agrees with them. He augments the British and Canadian force to 300 men, when, as a matter of fact, it was just 240, including Indians. Volunteer Piggott of the 89th Light Company, who was taken prisoner, could have given him more correct information on this point, and in fact, Butler's report to Harrison, dated March 7th, put the British strength at 236 men as stated by "prisoners"—Piggott was the only prisoner taken. The effect of the fire of the detachments of the 24th and regulars of the 28th upon the British is largely exaggerated, and he says nothing about pouring water along the face of the western hill to make ice and covering up the deception with snow. This last statement is supported by the authority of Thompson, and traditional evidence on this point is also very abundant. The writer, among other sources, procured information about throwing water on the hill to make ice and then covering it with snow to entrap the British, from an old gentleman who in turn got it from a member of the militia—John T. Doane—who was present at this action in the Long Woods. While praising his officers for the assistance they gave him in winning this victory at Battle Hill he neglects to give any credit to the Canadian who, tradition strongly asserts, suggested to Holmes to throw water on the hillside, on the western bank of Twenty Mile Creek, besides informing him as to the whereabouts of the excellent position here taken by the invaders as well as for the information given him as to the movements and position of the British at Delaware on the 3rd, and also the strength of the force. Basden, rash as he was on that occasion, would, in all probability have won the day, but for this unlooked for event of throwing

water on the hills to the west. The number of British killed and wounded is considerably exaggerated relative to the number engaged, and though he praises them for their gallantry, he gives no reasons for his own rapid retreat to Detroit, immediately after the conclusion of the fight.

Lieut.-Col. Butler to Major-General Harrison.

Dear Sir:—"By Lieut. Shannon of the United States Infantry I have the honor of informing you that a detachment of troops under my command, led by Captain Holmes of the 24th United States Infantry, has obtained a signal victory over the enemy. The affair took place on the 4th inst., about a hundred miles from this place on the River de French. Our force consisted of not more than 160 Rangers and mounted infantry. The enemy from their own acknowledgment, had about 240. The fine light company of Scots Greys is totally destroyed; they led the attack most gallantly and their commander fell within ten paces of our front line. The light company of the 89th has also suffered severely; one officer of the company fell, one is a prisoner and another is said to be badly wounded. In killed, wounded and prisoners the enemy lost about eighty, whilst on our part there was but four killed and four wounded. The great disparity in the loss on each side is to be attributed to the very judicious position occupied by Captain Holmes, who compelled the enemy to attack him at a great disadvantage. This, even more than his gallantry, merits the laurel.

Captain Holmes has just returned and will furnish a detailed account of the expedition which shall be immediately transmitted to you.

Enemy's forces as stated by prisoners:

Royal Scots	101
89th Regiment	45
Militia	50
Indians	40 to 60
	236

A. BUTLER,
Lieut.-Col. Commandant at Detroit.

Detroit, March 7th, 1814.

(Author's Note—Butler uses the word "prisoners." There was only one prisoner taken, namely, Volunteer Piggott.)

APPENDIX C.

NOTES—PERSONAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL

James Madison, the fourth President of the United States, was a native of Virginia, and held office during two terms, viz., from March 4th, 1809, till march 4th, 1817. During his term the second war between the United States and Great Britain took place. Personally, he was opposed to the war, declaring it unrighteous, as well as unnecessary. His peculiar ambition, however, was allowed to overcome his judgment, since many of the leaders of the political party to which he belonged, refused to support his nomination for a second presidential term unless he sanctioned the commencement of hostilities, which, after much hesitation, he accordingly did. He died in 1836, aged 85 years.

Roundhead, a celebrated chief of the Wyandots, headed one-half of his nation on the side of the British at the beginning of the war, as did another chief, Walk-in-the-Water, command the other half of the tribe, on the side of the Americans. His Indian name was Staw-yeh-tauh, but was also known as Brandy-Jack from his dissolute habits. It was he who took General James Winchester prisoner at the battle of River Raisin, and personally conducted him to Procter. He died in August, 1813, aged about 60 years.

General William Hull was an old Revolutionary veteran, and upon the breaking out of the war was appointed to the command of the Northwest. He failed to capture Amherstburg, owing to the arrival of Brock from Niagara with timely assistance, and was in time besieged in Detroit and compelled to surrender the place, August 16th, 1812. For this act he was court-martialed and condemned to death, but his life was spared through the clemency of the President, by reason of his services on behalf of his country during the war of the Revolution. His wife was named Sarah Fuller and from her he had eight daughters and one son, Abraham Fuller Hull. This son was born in 1786, graduated from Harvard Law School in 1805, and was the third attorney ever admitted to practice by the Detroit bar. He entered the army in 1811, and was his father's adjutant when Detroit surrendered. Was a captain of the 9th U. S. Infantry when he was killed at the battle of Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, aged 28 years, where his grave is still shown on the battlefield. General Hull died in November, 1825, at Newton, Massachusetts, and his wife the following year. Documents recently unearthed by Mr. C. M. Burton, of Detroit, show that Gen. Lewis Cass, and not Hull, was to blame for the surrender of that city to Brock.

Detroit (the Narrows) was founded in 1701 by La Motte-Cadillac, and soon became an important trading post during the

period of French domination in Canada. When Capt. Beletre surrendered the place to Major Rogers in 1760 it contained about 250 inhabitants. After having withstood a prolonged siege by Pontiac, extending over about a year and a half (1763-1764) it remained a British possession until it was acquired by the United States under John Jay's Treaty, in 1796. It again passed under British rule for a brief period from August 16th, 1812, till September 28th, 1813, when the garrison was withdrawn by Procter during his disastrous retreat from Amherstburg to Moravian Town. Although the settlement was called Detroit, yet the fort itself was formerly named Ponchartrain, and stood back from the river, at some distance, and was surrounded by a high wooden palisade. The streets at this time were very narrow, and the houses nearly all wooden, and built closely together. In 1812 its population had grown to about 2,500.

Sandwich, originally called L'Assomption, was a French Catholic Mission as early as 1747, although its present existing records carry the reader back only to 1760. After the conquest in 1760 its name was changed to its present designation, and it still contains many reminders of a departed age. During the campaign of 1812 and 1813 it was Procter's headquarters.

The parish still bears its former French name, slightly modified to "Assumption." In 1817 it had 260 inhabited houses, with a population of about 1,000.

Tippecanoe River, a tributary of the Wabash, is in the western part of the State of Indiana, and memorable for the battle fought on its banks, November 7th, 1811, between the Americans under Harrison, and the Shawanees, with other allied Indian tribes, under Elksottawa or Laulewasekaw, a brother of Tecumseh, and in the temporary absence of the latter. The Indians were defeated, with a loss of 40 killed, while the Americans had 62 killed and 126 wounded. Some thirty years ago the Legislature of the State appropriated $35,000 to erect an iron fence around the battlefield, to replace the former wooden one.

Tecumseh, or Tek-kum-thai, which means, in the Shawanee tongue, "a tiger crouching for his prey," the great Indian warrior and statesman, was born on the banks of the Mad River, in Ohio, in the year 1768. He seems to have been imbued with a fierce hatred of the American nation, and endeavored by all means possible to prevent the territories of the Indians from being appropriated by them. In most respects he was certainly a remarkable man, and in breadth of ideas, together with his unbounded influence over the savage tribes of the continent, was no unworthy successor of the renowned Pontiac (1763), or of the equally famous Pometacon, or Metacomet, chief of the Wampanoags (1676.) He was humane towards a fallen foe, and in dram-

atic eloquence among Indians, has seldom been equalled, much less surpassed. He loyally stood by the British while he lived, and was present at all the important battles, in which the army of the Right Division was engaged. Had his advice been acted upon, the Americans would have been met on the banks of the Detroit River, at their landing place, below Amherstburg, and the disaster of Moravian Town probably averted. The most popular authority appears to state that he was killed at the battle of Moravian Town, Oct. 5th, 1813, by Col. Richard M. Johnson, a Kentuckian. But this is disputed by Capt. "Billy" Caldwell, a half-breed, who was present at this action, and who always maintained that Johnson slew a Pattawattomie brave, and not Tecumseh. James Knaggs (1780-1860) who fought in the American army there and knew Tecumseh personally, was strongly of a different opinion, which was set forth in an affidavit made by him and exhibited in Ross' History of the Knaggs Family, which stated that without a shadow of doubt, Tecumseh was slain by Johnson.

Amherstburg, named after Sir Jeffrey Amherst, Governor-General of Canada, by Robert Rogers, who visited its site in 1763 while on his way from Montreal to receive the capitulation of Detroit, was founded in 1795, and the British garrison withdrawn to this place in the following year from Detroit. The land upon which Amherstburg now stands, including an area of seven miles square, was, however, granted to Jonathan and Jacob Schifflin on October 13th, 1783, by the Ottawa Indians for a very trifling amount, which grant was afterwards annulled by the British Government, whereupon the Schifflins retired to New York City, and there became wealthy before they died. Although originally called Fort Amherstburg the place was known as Malden during the war of 1812-14, but subsequently the name Amherstburg was resumed. Harrison took up his quarters here for a short time after his victory at Moravian Town, and it is said that "he neither threatened nor molested the inhabitants" during the residence at the post. In 1817 Amherstburg contained 108 inhabited houses, with a population of 675. Its natural, and also its historic attractions, at the present day, are truly wonderful. The past and the present, the old and the new, exist here side by side, furnishing an almost unlimited amount of food for reflection to the observant stranger sojourning within its gates. During the war it remained in possession of the Americans, according to their accounts, from Sept. 24th, 1813, but according to British accounts from Sept. 27th, 1813, until July 1st, 1815, when the place was evacuated by them. This post was the only portion of British territory held by the enemy at the conclusion of the war.

William Henry Harrison was born in Virginia in 1773, and having graduated from Hampden Sidney College, applied himself

to the study of medicine. He broke off his professional studies without taking his degree and entered the army, and distinguishing himself in the Indian wars, finally became Lieut.-Gov. of the American Northwest Territories. In 1799 he entered Congress, and soon afterwards was appointed Governor of the Territory of Michigan. His victories at Tippancanoe, Nov. 7th, 1811, and Moravian Town, October 5th, 1813, as well as his success as an administrator, gave him great influence in the councils of his nation. He was defeated in the Presidential campaign of 1836, but was elected November 4th, 1840, and inaugurated March 4th, 1841, but lived only one month after he had become President. As a military officer he was gentle and humane.

Col. Richard Mentor Johnson, the alleged slayer of Tecumseh, held the position of Vice-President of the United States during the term of 1837-1841. He was born in Kentucky in 1781, and was elected member of the United States Congress during the war of 1812-14. He was an attorney by profession, and died in his native state in 1850.

Isaac Shelby was a veteran of the Revolution and a man of great energy and force of character. He was born in 1750 and was the first Governor of Kentucky as a state, and held office during two different terms, namely, 1790-2 and 1812-14. He commanded a body of 1,500 mounted riflemen from his state during the campaign 1813, and was present at the battle of Moravian Town. He was of Welsh descent and died in 1826. By profession he was a land surveyor, as was also his father before him.

Major-General Henry Procter, who was defeated at Moravian Town by Harrison, seems to be often confused with another officer of the same name, who also served in the war, if we should be allowed to judge from the erroneous manner in which his name is frequently spelled.

Henry Procter was born in 1765 and at the age of 16 entered the army. His conduct of the Michigan campaign of 1813 was indeed quite creditable; with less than 1,000 white troops and a very unreliable Indian force, he destroyed three American armies, each as large as his own. He seems to receive more than his full share of the blame for his conduct at the retreat from Amherstburg to Moravian Town. This retreat was conducted badly enough in all conscience, and deserved a large amount of censure, but to lay all the blame at his door seems quite unreasonable and unfair. Reinforcements that he asked for from headquarters, and, in fact, could not be spared, were never sent, and as a consequence he and his soldiers became dispirited because of this neglect. For his defeat at Moravian Town he was suspended from service, and pay for six months, by decree, dated 9th September, 1815. He died in 1822 at Bath, England.

Lieut.-Gen. Henry Adolphus Proctor was born in 1784, came to Canada with his regiment in 1814, and served on the Niagara frontier. He died in Wales in 1859.

George Ward, of Ward's Station, was born in Ireland in 1743. He was the eldest son of the family and in early life became a soldier, as did also his brothers. After a military career, both in England and Ireland in the 58th Foot, he embarked with his regiment, the 62nd Foot, for Quebec on May 29th, 1776. He afterwards saw severe fighting during the Revolutionary War, both in Canada and in the revolted colonies, remaining in the struggle until its close in 1783. He was present at the action (among others) which ended in the surrender of Burgoyne, at Saratoga Springs, to the Americans in 1777. He retired from the service in 1796, in which he had been a sergeant in the 24th Foot, and a sergeant-major in the 105th Foot, and took up his residence near where Chatham now stands. He there became the original patentee of lot 67, in the "Old Survey" of that city, having procured it from the Crown in 1802.

In the following year he disposed of his farm in that vicinity, which he had obtained as a military grant, and removed about thirty-five miles farther up the Thames, to the site of the present Village of Wardsville, for many years afterwards known as Ward's Station. Owing to difficulties with the Chippewa Indians Ward was in 1809 obliged to quit his newly found home in the Long Woods and return to the "Old Settlement" near Chatham. In 1812 he again took his abode in the "Forty Mile Wood" as it was then sometimes called.

At the commencement of the war he was appointed drill instructor in the Kent Militia, in which capacity he acted for a brief period with indeed very indifferent success, and was also in the former part of the war a dispatch carrier. Ward witnessed the surrender of Detroit to Brock (Aug. 16th, 1812) and followed Procter on the occasion of the disastrous retreat of the latter from Moravian Town to Burlington. Although he seems to have suffered considerably, in a financial way, from losses to his crops and buildings, during the war, from both friends and foes, yet on the whole, he appears to have been fairly generously recompensed therefor. In fact, he seems to have fared better than many others in this respect, notably those at Port Dover and elsewhere, who lost their property during the war.

Ward's loyalty to the British Crown was, however, at times, very seriously called into question, and during his latter years was always under a cloud of suspicion for having given, as was alleged, such advice and information as largely enabled the invaders to win the day at "Battle Hill." General Armstrong's narrative seems to confirm this opinion, and, in fact, Ward was

openly charged by Captain Caldwell of the Canadian Rangers and others with being a traitor. One of his sons was killed at the siege of Fort Erie, Nov. 28th, 1813, and two others, named William and John respectively, served for a time in McGregor's Company of the Kent Volunteers. For several years his house, which stood on the west bank of Paint Creek, in the northwest angle on lot 16, range 1, south of the Longswoods Road, Mosa, where he kept a sort of caravansary, was known as Ward's Station. John Howison, who stopped over night there on Christmas eve of 1819, speaks of Ward's hospitality towards those of his guests who were at all inclined to be communicative. When the township of Mosa was surveyed in 1820, by Mahlon Burwell, he complained to the Government that he was only allowed the patent to lots 16 and 17, south of the aforesaid road, along with that to the south half of lot 16 on the north thereof, containing, in all, about 200 acres. His claim to more land was put forth on the ground of his former military services, apparently ignoring the fact that he had already received his reward therefor in the form of a grant at the "Old Settlement." On April 13th, 1825, patents to the above lands were issued to Ward and his three sons, William Ward, Alexander Daniel Ward and Talbot St. John Ward, as tenants in common. He died at his home in Wardsville about 1832, and is buried there. The property at Chatham hereinbefore mentioned, was on Dec. 11th, 1837, disposed of, his widow, Margaret Ward, and son, William Ward, joining in the deed of conveyance. Many of his descendants still reside at or near the present Village of Wardsville, Alexander Daniel Ward died at Wardsville in the autumn of 1876, and his only sister, a Mrs. Banning, died at a very advanced age about 1882. Ward was by religion an Episcopalian. It will be noticed that Captain Basden in his report of the fight at Battle Hill refers to Ward's place of residence. He was then the only settler living in the "Long Woods" belt.

(Note.—The writer intends at some future time to make the life of Ward the subject of a separate paper, and for that reason, the above biography is comparatively brief.)

Dolsen's farm is situated on the north side of the Thames River, in the Township of Dover East, in the County of Kent, about two and one-half miles below the Town of Chatham, and is known as lots 18 and 19, in the first concession of the aforesaid township. The patent of this farm was issued to Matthew Dolsen, originally Van Dolsen, in 1796. His loyalty to the British Crown seems to have sat very lightly upon his shoulders (if indeed he had any) as he deserted to the Americans in the early stages of the war. While he remained on the American side of the border assisting the enemies of his country, his wife and

family for a time enjoyed the protection of the Canadian Government until they finally joined him at Detroit, where he amassed an ample fortune and an unreliable reputation. A late Canadian senator, who knew his record well, gives him a very poor certificate of character. The first house erected on the farm was constructed of hewed logs, which was afterwards replaced by one of bricks. His son, John Dolsen, born in 1782, inherited the farm from his father, and kept a general country store, and was also the registrar of deeds. The farm subsequently descended to Uriah John Dolsen, a son of John, who afterwards sold it. It is now owned by James Scott Gray, a member of the firm of William Gray & Sons, Chatham, and is still known as the "Dolsen Farm."

There is another farm on the south side of the Thames, in the Township of Raleigh, Kent County, which was settled upon by Isaac Dolsen, a brother of Matthew, and is situated about six miles below Chatham. The American army, while advancing up the river in pursuit of Procter, (who, however, marched up the north side) crossed over his farm and left some reminders of their stay here. In the walls of the old farm house still standing are shown the bullet holes of their rifle shots. The old Dolsen burying ground is on this farm.

Hezekiah Jackson enlisted in the State of Tennessee, as an ensign in the 24th U. S. Infantry, on March 13th, 1813, and appointed 3rd lieutenant on the 15th day of August, 1813, which commission he held when he fought at Battle Hill under Holmes, by whom he is specially mentioned for meritorious conduct in that action. He was afterwards transferred to the U. S. 2nd Rifles on May 28th, 1814, but finally returned to his old regiment the 24th U. S. Infantry, on the 29th July, 1814. He accompanied Holmes and Cotgrove in their ill starred expedition against Fort Michilimackinac and was killed in the attack upon the post on the morning of August 4th, 1814. His remains, along with those of Holmes, who was also slain there, were shipped to Detroit and buried side by side in the old Protestant cemetery there (See Holmes.)

Moravian Town, originally called Fairfield, was settled by the Delaware Indians in 1792. They were largely Christians, and were accompanied by missionaries of the Moravian persuasion, hence the name "Moravian Town," which was applied to the settlement as early as 1795. The Moravian Reserve at one time extended along both banks of the Thames a few miles above Thamesville, but now lies entirely on the south side of that river. These Delawares formerly came from the Muskingum River country, in the State of Ohio. They were called Delawares from the fact that they had previously resided on the banks of the

Delaware River. The original seats of both Delawares and Wyandots seem to have been in the Ungava District of the Labrador Peninsula.

Oliver Hazard Perry—of naval fame—was a native of Rhode Island and was only 28 years of age when he achieved his victory over Captain Barclay, Sept. 10th, 1813, which was the first and only naval battle in which he was ever engaged. His statute now stands in Wade Park, Cleveland. He is often spoken of as Commodore Perry, when, as a matter of fact, he never held a higher rank than that of Post-Captain. He died in 1819.

Robert Herriott Barclay saw considerable of service in the British navy before his defeat by Perry. He served under Nelson at the Nile (1798) Trafalgar (1805) where he lost an arm. Had he displayed the same energy in fitting up his fleet as Perry did, the result of the battle of Lake Erie might have been different, even with the slender resources at his command. For his defeat he was tried by court-martial and acquitted. He died at Edinburgh, May 8th, 1837, aged 52 years, so that he and Perry were of the same age.

John T. Doan was a militia man, who fought at Battle Hill and afterwards was present at the battle of Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, during which he is said to have lain concealed behind a pile of fence rails, securely screened from the plunging balls of the American rifles. He afterwards lived on a farm in the Township of Yarmouth, in the County of Elgin, and died about 1863. He was one of the authorities for the statement that the invaders poured water on the face of Battle Hill to make ice, but does not appear to say at whose suggestion this was done. However, other traditional authorities, through different sources, by their agreement seem to establish this last question beyond all doubt. The family were originally Pennsylvania Dutch and came from Bucks County in that state, and his father and uncles are said to have been members of Butler's Rangers during the Revolutionary War. His brother, Joshua G. Doan, was executed in London, Ont., in January, 1840, for complicity in the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38.

John Mitchell, who appears to have resided in the Township of Dunwich, in the County of Elgin, near Port Talbot, was also in this action at Battle Hill as a member of the militia and was wounded there and rendered unfit for service. The report says that he was plundered by the enemy and left with a wife and small family destitute of the necessaries of life. In April, 1815, he received the sum of £25 as a partial compensation for his losses, and in May, 1816, he was granted the further sum of £20, with the same object in view. Both these amounts were paid him by the Loyal and Patriotic Society. His name appears

among those entitled to a grant of land for services as militiamen during the war.

John B. Laughton was born at Detroit in 1787 while it was yet a British possession. When in 1796 many residents of English, Irish and Scotch nationalities, "preferring not to be Yankees," as Laughton expressed it, crossed over to the Canadian side of the Detroit River, the family to which he belonged came also and settled at Chatham, where in 1802, John Laugh-

1812, accepted the commission from Fort Washington, now Cincinnati, in the then territory of Mississippi on April 29th, 1812.

On June 8th, 1813, he was promoted to the rank of major and assistant adjutant-general. Having resigned this commission on

ton, the father, obtained the patent to lot 10 in the Old Survey of that place. On Jan. 7th, 1808, John B. Laughton, then residing at Sandwich, sold this property, the father having died in the meantime. From Sandwich, where he dwelt, he saw the white flag (a table cloth) unfurled, that proclaimed the surrender of Detroit in 1812. He was a member of the Kent Militia, and was present at the action at Battle Hill and also at the battle of Chippewa, July 5th, 1814, where his brother was killed. He was also present at the action at Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, where he was taken prisoner and carried off to Greenbush, opposite Albany. After his release he again took up his residence at Sandwich, during which period he held office as one of the wardens of St. John's Episcopal Church, of that town, during the years 1838-1840, and again in 1844. He died at Sandwich on Dec. 26th, 1879, aged 92 years, and so far as is known was the last survivor of the fight at Battle Hill.

Isaac Lee first took service in a troop of Michigan militia dragoons, commanded by Captain Richard Smith, having been enrolled on May 11th, 1812. He shortly afterwards commanded a small body of mounted militia, recruited from the vicinity of River Raisin, now French Town, in the State of Michigan, in which corps he held the rank of captain from October, 1813, till April, 1814, and distinguished himself by the capture of Colonel Francis Baby, already referred to. He took part in the action at Battle Hill and received the thanks of his superior officer, Captain Holmes, for his gallant conduct there. James Knaggs (1780-1860), the captor of John McGregor, of Sandwich, and M. P. P. for the County of Kent, served under Lee as a private in his Michigan Militia Dragoons, spoken of by Harrison as "River Raisin men, the best troops in the world." After the war he was appointed justice of the peace for the district of Erie, Michigan, May 9th, 1816, and was afterwards appointed assistant registrar of Macomb County, Michigan, July 14th, 1817.

Ensign Heard was a grandson of the celebrated Morgan of

Revolutionary fame, and served as adjutant to Captain Holmes in his expedition from Amherstburg, which resulted in the action at Battle Hill. He is specially mentioned by Holmes and praised for his assistance in preventing a further retreat from Twenty Mile Creek against the judgment of the other officers who strongly pressed Holmes not to make a stand at this place, but fall back closer to the base of operations before engaging with the British. He was slain on the night of August 12th, 1814, in a naval skirmish near Fort Erie, in which the American schooners, Ohio and Somers, were captured by Captain Dobbs of the British Royal navy and a force of 75 men in nine boats. It will be noticed that Heard was killed just eight days after the death of Captain Holmes, the victor at Battle Hill.

Twenty Mile Creek (not to be confounded with Twenty Mile Creek on the Niagara Peninsula) is not known by that name today, and in fact there does not appear to be a man now living who ever knew it by that name. Although called Twenty Mile Creek in old records written during and shortly after the war, it is now popularly known as "Battle Hill Creek." In the original field notes of the Township of Mosa, written in the spring of 1820, it is referred to as "A brook where the Battle of Long Woods was fought during the late war."

Francis Baby (pronounced Bawbee), the ninth child of Jacques Duperon Baby (the friend of Major Gladwin and of Pontiac) was born at Detroit in September, 1768. He married Fanny Abbott on September 5th, 1795, who was only 16 years old. In his time held several offices, which among others were Deputy Lieutenant for Essex County, commissioner of the peace, justice of the peace, and was also a member of the Upper Canadian House of Assembly, having represented Essex, and the now extinct County of Suffolk from 1792 to 1796. The farm, consisting of 1,000 acres, upon which he lived, is now included within the limits of the present City of Windsor. He was appointed colonel of the militia in the early part of the war and was wounded at the battle of Moravian Town, and was one of the very few officers in Procter's army who escaped to the Niagara frontier. Having returned from there in the early part of 1814 he established a small post on that river, below where Chatham now stands. Lieut.-Col. Butler having been apprised of this, sent Captain Isaac Lee with a party of Michigan Militia Dragoons to reconnoitre and, if possible, disperse this force. Lee gained the rear of Baby without being observed, and having scattered his force in all directions, took Baby prisoner, February 3rd, 1814. He returned to his farm after the war, where he died, Nov. 22nd, 1858, after having taken part in the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38, and fought in the battle of Windsor, December 4th, 1838.

Alexander Stewart, who was in charge of the post of observation at Delaware during the latter part of 1813, and the early part of 1814, was born in Scotland, and while yet a young man entered the army as ensign of the 1st Foot (otherwise known as the Royal Scots Regiment) on January 12th, 1796. He was afterwards advanced on November 4th, 1799, to the rank of lieutenant of the 4th Foot, and transferred to the 1st Foot as lieutenant on May 30th, 1800, and promoted to the grade of captain on August 23rd, 1804. His other positions were brevet-major, 4th June, 1814, major of the 1st Foot, December 1st, 1814, and lieutenant-colonel in the same regiment on November 23rd, 1815. He retired from the service on half-pay with the rank of lieutenant-colonel on March 25th, 1816, and died in 1822. While the action at Battle Hill was being fought, Stewart was on the way there from Delaware, having been previously detained at that place, in endeavoring to send some Wyandots with ammunition to their brethren on the St. Clair River.

James Lewis Basden, C. B., was born in Westmoreland, England, on February 29th, 1785, and appointed ensign of the 94th Foot on January 12th, 1800, and lieutenant in the same regiment on March 17th, 1801.

In this latter capacity he took part in the Mahratta War in Hindoostan during the years 1803-4-5, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, and was present at the taking of Burhampor, Asseerghur, Argaum, Lasselgaum, Chawdore, Jauluah and Gwilleghur. On December 30th, 1806, he was advanced to the rank of captain in the 89th, a position which he held when he commanded the British and Canadians at the time of his defeat in the action of the "Long Woods," Friday, March 4th, 1814. In consequence of a severe wound received at this place, in the upper part of the right thigh, he was recompensed with one year's full pay in addition to his regular salary. The other actions in which he took part, during the war of 1812-14, were the taking of Black Rock and Buffalo, December 30th, 1813, Lundy's Lane, July 25th, 1814, where he was again wounded (this time slightly), and Fort Erie, August 15th, 1814. After this event he was promoted to the rank of brevet-major for his services in the war, December 30th, 1815, and became a major of the 89th on November 25th, 1821. With this rank he served in the first Burmese war, 1824-25 and fought under Sir Archibald Campbell at the taking of Rangoon, and Tavy and Mergui, under Sir E. Miles. His next promotion was Brevet Lieut.-Col. 89th Foot, 7th of July, 1838. He retired on full pay on the 16th of June, 1843, and was afterwards promoted to the position of brevet colonel, November 28th, 1854. For his distinguished services in the field he was finally rewarded by his sovereign with

the distinction of Campanion of the Bath, and was specially mentioned in the Home Dispatches of the Governor-General of India. He died on May 22nd, 1856.

Andrew Hunter Holmes was a native of Virginia, and having been appointed captain in the 24th U. S. Infantry March 12th, September 4th, 1813, he returned to his former grade as captain in the 24th, which rank he held when sent out by Lieut.-Col. Butler to lead the expedition into Upper Canada, which resulted in his victory at Battle Hill, March 4th, 1814, and subsequent rapid retreat to Detroit. For his success in this action he was again promoted to the position of major in the 32nd U. S. Infantry, April 18th, 1814, and appointed military commandant at the post of Amherstburg, where excessive mildness does not appear to have been, by any means, the chief characteristic of his administration. In the early part of July, 1814, he was sent out as second in command of an expedition under Col. George Crogan, the ultimate object of which was the capture of Fort Michilimackinac. After considerable plundering and destruction of property at Sault Ste. Marie, the British, maintaining that the property was private and belonging to the Hudson Bay Co. and the Americans holding that it was really public and belonging to the British Government, the Americans disembarked on Mackinaw Island on the morning of August 4th, 1814, for the purpose of attacking the fort. Their regulars, amounting to 430, formed the second line of attack under the command of Holmes, while the first line, composed of militia, was commanded by Col. Cotgrove. Before going into action Mr. Holmes was strongly advised by a Mr. Simon Davenport to exchange his uniform for plain clothes, as he would be made a marked man by the Winnebago Indians, in the British service, whose village near the Sault he had caused to be destroyed, but he obstinately replied that a uniform was made to wear, and he was going to wear it. In leading his troops in the attack upon the British position, five balls entered his chest, from the effect of which he was instantly killed (August 4th, 1814).

When his men retreated after their unsuccessful assault his body was left on the field, and concealed by some British soldiers under leaves and fence rails to prevent an outrage by the Indians. Shortly afterwards it was discovered by two Frenchmen who stripped the corpse naked and carried off all its belongings. The British Commandant, upon hearing of this, declared that he would shoot the rascals at once, unless the uniform, watch, papers and other valuables of the fallen officer were immediately restored to his friends, which they unwillingly did, and with the body, were given over to the proper authorities. Holmes' sword, however, fell into the hands of the Indians and by them was

presented to George Johnston (1796-1861), the half-breed son of John Johnston (1762-1828), a British trader residing at the Sault. Lieutenant Jackson of the 2th U. S. Infantry, who fought under Holmes at Battle Hill, was also slain in this attack upon Fort Mackinaw, which happened exactly five months after the fight at the former place. On August 17th, 1814, the bodies of Holmes and Jackson were brought to Detroit on an American vessel and buried side by side in the old Protestant cemetery there, and minute guns fired over their graves. After the conclusion of the war Fort Mackinaw was restored to the Americans, and by them was called Fort Holmes from the name of this officer.

"Billy" Caldwell was the son of Colonel William Caldwell, an old Revolutionary officer of Irish nationality, and a captain in Butler's Rangers, who emigrated from Virginia in 1784, and a Pottawaomie woman. He was born near Amherstburg, and in August, 1812, we find him at Fort Dearborn, now Chicago, where he was instrumental in saving the lives of some white settlers from massacre at the hands of the Indians. He fought on the side of the British during the war and was present at all the battles in which the army of the Right Division took part from River Raisin, 22nd of January, 1813, until the battle of the Thames, near Moravian Town, October 5th, 1813. He then joined the army of the Centre Division and was present at the engagement at Battle Hill, where he commanded a small body of Pottawattomies and Wyandots. He was the Saganah or chief of the former tribe. After the conclusion of the war he returned to Fort Dearborn and from there went to Council Bluffs, Iowa, where he died in 1835. He was present as a witness at the trial of Procter for military incapacity in 1815. The writer was once shown the rifle which he carried in the actions at Moravian Town and Battle Hill, and his pleasure could perhaps be better imagined than described, as he examined this grim old relic of the interesting events of nearly a century ago.

William Caldwell, a half brother of "Billy," the son of Colonel William Caldwell, above named, and his wife, Susan Baby, was born on his father's farm, just outside the limits of Amherstburg, in 1784. He served in the war as a lieutenant in the first Essex Militia, and was present with his father and brothers, at the battle of the Thames, near Moravian Town. At the engagement at Battle Hill he commanded a small body of Canadian Rangers as captain and had his advice been followed this fight would certainly have had a different ending. After the war he returned to Amherstburg, where he married Ruth Johnson, in 1822. He lived at Amherstburg during the remaining portion of his life and died there in 1873. He was by religion a Roman Catholic.

William Henry enlisted as second lieutenant in the 28th U. S. Infantry in Kentucky on May 20th, 1813, and was subsequently raised to the rank of first lieutenant in the same regiment, which commission he held when he fought at Battle Hill. He was honorably discharged from the service on June 15th, 1815, and died on February 6th, 1846. He is also made mention of by Holmes for gallant conduct at Battle Hill.

Ebenezer Knox entered the service, in the then Territory of Mississippi, as an ensign in the 21st U. S. Infantry, on March 12th, 1812, and for dishonorable conduct was expelled from the army on March 2nd, 1813. He appears to have again enlisted in the 28th Kentucky and was present at the fight at Battle Hill in the capacity of lieutenant in that regiment. He seems to have worked hard to remove the stain caused by his previous conduct, as Holmes praises him in his report on the action at Battle Hill.

John C. Potter was enrolled as a third lieutenant in the 26th U. S. Infantry (Vermont) and fought at Battle Hill, his name being one of those specially mentioned in the report of Holmes, the commanding officer, for his valuable service there. He was transferred to the 24th Kentucky Infantry on July 29th, 1814, and was present at the attack on Fort Mackinaw, August 4th, 1814, where Holmes and Lieutenant Jackson were killed. He was promoted on October 17th, 1814, to the rank of second lieutenant, and honorably discharged in June, 1815.

The Longwoods Road was, during the closing years of the eighteenth century, merely a trail running through the Long Woods (whence its name) and extending north of the Thames River, from London to Chatham. Lieut.-Governor Simcoe made a trip over it in 1793, when travelling from Niagara to the southwesterly portion of the then Province of Upper Canada. During the year 1800 this trail was somewhat improved and made only tolerably fit for the transportation of troops, artillery and military stores. When the Township of Mosa was surveyed in 1820 by the late Mahlon Burwell (grandfather of the present family of that name, in the Township of Caradoc), the road was in some measure straightened by cutting off some of its angles and bends, but nevertheless, it by means represents a straight line. This newly-surveyed road was then taken as a base line in surveying to the Thames in the townships of Mosa, Ekfrid and Caradoc, each range being parallel to this road. Two ranges of lots on the north side of the road were similarly surveyed, and farther to the north, straight lines were then run. Tremaine's Map of the County of Middlesex, bearing date 1862, very well illustrates the above remarks. In the earliest maps it is shown as "Road leading through the Long Woods."

In November, 1824, fifty-eight lots on the south side of the

road in the Long Woods tract were set apart to be granted to persons who would assist in making the road a proper means of communication between the Western District (Kent, Essex and Lambton) and the other settled portions of the province, and the whole matter was placed in the hands of Colonel Talbot for execution. With what measure of success this scheme was attended the writer is not prepared to state.

The County of Kent originally extended from Hudson Bay to the Mississippi River and included Detroit and Sandwich, among other posts. Its narrowest part represented a strip of land four miles wide in the northern portion of the present County of Essex, stretching along the eastern shores of the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair, from Sandwich to the Thames River. It included all the remaining portion of the then Province of Upper Canada, not contained in the original nineteen counties which included Essex on the west and Glengarry on the east, and was certainly the largest county on record. The portion of the county now lying within the limits of the United States was lost to it by John Jay's Treaty of 1796, otherwise its boundaries remained unchanged until after the war.

The Thames River is first exhibited in Bellini's map of 1744, but without giving it a name. Appended to this map is a note stating that it had been explored for eighty leagues from its mouth, without meeting a rapid or obstacle of any sort. Previous to and for a long time after this date it was called by the Chippewa Indians the "Ask-un-e-see-be" or the "Antlered River," alluding to its appearance at Upper Forks, where London now stands. In 1745 it was called by the French trappers, who frequented its neighborhood, "La Riviere La Tranchee' or simply "La Tranche," from its trench-like appearance from its mouth up towards the present site of Chatham. In fact, it is yet often called "La Tranche" by many of the older French-Canadian inhabitants who reside below Chatham. Peter Bell's map of 1772 calls it the "New River," which name it retained, at least officially, until May 22nd, 1784, as shown by a grant of land from the Indians to the Canadian Government of that date. It was called by its present name in 1793 by Lieut.-Governor Simcoe, who, English as he was, if nothing else, abolished native names all over the Province, substituting therefor Anglo-Saxon appellations, which have neither sense nor reason when applied to the physical features of Canada. It is pleasing to note, however, that out of the general wreck a few native names still survived. The late William Baby, formerly collector of customs at Windsor, Ontario, and nephew of the late Colonel Francis Baby, sailed down this river from London to Chatham in a small boat, amid immense cakes of floating ice, in the early spring of 1834.

John McGregor was born in Argyleshire, Scotland. His name, apparently, first appears in Canadian records as the original patentee of lot 20, in the 5th concession of the Township of Walsingham, in the present County of Norfolk, Ontario, containing 200 acres. This patent bears date the 31st day of March, 1807. Just before the opening of the war he was residing in the woods of the Township of Dover East, in the County of Kent, and near the Thames River. Shortly after the commencement of hostilities he received his first military commission in July, 1812, as ensign in Captain John Dolsen's company of the Royal Kent Volunteers. During the year 1813 he was promoted to the grade of lieutenant in this same branch of the service, which position he held as late as May, 1814, and certainly he appears to have been very active in the defence of his adopted country. In the month of December, 1813, McGregor, with seven of his company, assisted Lieut. Medcalf, with twenty-five regulars and volunteers in the capture of thirty-nine U. S. regulars at McLears, near Dolsen's farm, about fifteen miles from the mouth of the Thames River. This feat was accomplished about an hour before daylight, without any loss to the British and Canadians, but five Americans were wounded. In his report bearing date December 23rd, 1813, Medcalf says, among other things:

To Lieutenant McGregor I am under particular obligations for his zeal and assistance; his local knowledge of the country greatly facilitated the execution of the enterprise."

In February, 1814, McGregor, with some of his men, was pursued up the Thames by Captains Gill and Lee, of the Michigan Rangers and Militia Dragoons respectively, but having made good his escape, joined the regulars at Delaware under Captain Stewart. Immediately after this, McGregor took part in the action at "Battle Hill," March 4th, 1814, where, although he was severely wounded in the arm, which was subsequently amputated in consequence thereof, he played his part so well that his name is mentioned with approval in some of the military annals of his day. He, however, does not appear to have been any too popular among the men over whom he was placed in command.

Shortly after the fight at Battle Hill a number of them deserted through dissatisfaction with McGregor, the direct cause of which at this comparatively distant day does not clearly appear. In the month of June, 1814, he was promoted to a captaincy in the Kent Volunteers, and after the close of the war was placed on the retired list, with a pension of £20 per annum. On April 16, 1819, and while he was still living in Dover East, he sold his farm in Walsingham to John McGregor, of Sandwich, merchant and M. P. P. for the County of Kent, the consideration therefor being £175. The Captain does not appear to have

ever owned any land in Dover East. On December 15th, 1820, an allotment was made by the Government to McGregor for his military services of the north halves of lots 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, and the south halves of lots 12, 13 and 14, and also the south-west quarter of lot 15, in the first concession of the old Township of Sombra (as then constituted), now the Gore of the Township of Chatham, in the County of Kent, containing 900 acres, more or less. The order granting this allotment appears to have been stayed on account of a dispute respecting the south half of lot 11, but was finally approved of on June 30th, 1821. McGregor seems to have died in the early part of the year 1823. In March of that year a petition was forwarded by Mary McGregor to Sir Peregrine Maitland, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, which stated among other things, that she was the widow of Captain John McGregor, of the Kent Volunteers, who was severely wounded in action at the Long Woods, and that by reason of his death she was left in very reduced circumstances, with six children under sixteen years of age to support, and asked that she receive her husband's pension just as if he were still alive, and had served in the regular army instead of in the militia. This petition received the usual "most serious consideration" and it was not until the following October that a reply thereto was vouchsafed, to the effect that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury regretted that they had no funds to grant Mrs. McGregor the assistance which she solicited. The patent to the aforesaid lands was issued by the Heir and Devisee Commissioners on July 31st, 1831, to Donald McGregor, George McGregor, Alex. McGregor, Gregor McGregor, David McGregor, John McGregor, Isaac Brock McGregor, Elizabeth McDougall, wife of Arch. McDougall, Margaret McDonald, wife of John McDonald, and Annie McGregor, spinster, all of the Township of Dover, in the County of Kent, the devisees named in the last will and testament of the late John McGregor, of the Kent Volunteers, deceased, as tenants in common. Besides those just above named, McGregor appears to have had other children, namely William, Mary and James, who served in his father's company of the Kent Volunteers, and of whom an account is hereinafter written. The Village of Wallaceburg South now stands upon a portion of lot 13, and the Sydenham River intersects lots 12 and 13. The present police magistrate of the Town of Wallaceburg, Mr. A. McDougall, is a nephew of the aforesaid Elizabeth McDougall.

McGregor's company of Loyal Kent Volunteers was largely recruited from the Scotch settlers, originally located in the Baldoon Settlement, near Wallaceburg, by Lord Selkirk, in 1804, after whose castle in Scotland the place took its name. A perusal

of the Muster Roll of McGregor's Company plainly establishes the nationality of those enrolled theron.

Lauchlin McDougall was a member of McGregor's company and fought at Battle Hill. In the Muster Roll he is reported as "wounded and unfit for service." He was one of the original Baldoon settlers and erected the first house (a log shanty) in Wallaceburg in 1822.

John McDonald the son-in-law of Captain McGregor, also served in the war as a member of his company of Kent Volunteers.

James McGregor was a son of Lieutenant (afterwards captain) John McGregor, previously mentioned, and in 1802 became the patentee from the Crown of lot 6, in the "Old Survey" of the townsite of Chatham, then popularly known as the "Lower Forks." Prior to the breaking out of the war he resided in the Township of Howard, in the County of Kent, while his father lived in the Township of Dover East, in the same county. At the commencement of hostilities he enlisted as a private in Captain John Dolsen's company of Kent Volunteers, in which same company his father served as an ensign, sergeant, lieutenant and finally as a captain. James was present at the surrender of Detroit to the British, August 16th, 1812, and afterwards served under Major-General Henry Procter, taking part in the action at River Raisin, January 22nd, 1813, and the siege of Fort Meigs, on the Miami, or Maumee River, Ohio, in April, 1813. After the disastrous defeat of the latter officer at Moravian Town, October 5th, 1813, and consequent disappearance of the army of the right division as a fighting unit, the Kent Volunteers became attached to the army of the centre division under Lieutenant-General Drummond. McGregor assisted in the taking of Fort Niagara, December 19th, 1813, and was present in the action of the Long Woods (or Battle Hill), March 4th, 1814, and was there slightly wounded. He was injured in all five times during the war. The last and most serious occasion was in a skirmish with the enemy on Thames River, July 19th, 1814, where a musket ball, fired from behind, passed through the hip and lodged near the groin, just under the skin. He never fully recovered from the effect of this wound, which continued to trouble him through life, and rendered him almost entirely unable to earn a livelihood. Shortly after the month of April, 1814, upon the promotion of his father to the captaincy of his company he was appointed lieutenant, which rank he held until the close of the war. McGregor, like his father, was at the conclusion of the struggle granted a yearly pension of £20, payable from July 9th, 1814, the date of his last and severest wound. This pension he regularly received until July, 1821, when, by an act of the Legislature of the Province,

which provided that militia pensioners submit themselves to a medical examination before being granted any further assistance from the Government, McGregor lost his pension through the medical board having reported that he was not sufficiently disabled to warrant a continuation of his yearly allowance. Having vainly applied to the Legislature for a special act, granting him relief, he finally appealed to Lord Dalhousie, the governor-general, for another medical examination at Quebec, which was granted, and his case was then reported favorably. This proceeding on the part of Dalhousie was indeed quite illegal, since it aimed at setting aside the authority of a board, regularly constituted under an act of the Legislature. There is no doubt but what the system (or perhaps want of system) of granting pensions was subject to much abuse, men frequently obtaining them without having any legal or moral right thereto, and it was to correct abuses with regard to pensions that this act was passed. Apparently in this case the medical board pushed matters too far, as appears to be evident, having regard to McGregor's last infirmity, caused by his painful wound. To do him justice, he was certainly woefully ignorant of ordinary modes of conducting business, since we find that in July, 1821, he gave powers of attorney to three different persons to collect his pension, besides making personal application for it. The strange mode of procedure caused his arrest at the instance of Mr. W. W. Baldwin (father of the late Hon. Robert Baldwin) who appears to have acted at that time as a sort of solicitor for the treasury. He was now living in the Township of Flamboro West, in the County of Wentworth, and in very poor circumstances too. The Government, on July 12th, 1825, granted him the north halves of lots 16 and 17, concession 5, and the east half of lot 17, concession 4, in the Township of Garafraxa West, in the County of Wellington, Ontario, containing in all 500 acres, more or less. These lands he sold on December 5th, 1828, to the Hon. John Henry Dunn, who was then receiver-general of the Province, for the modest sum of £62 10s., his wife, Nancy McGregor (formerly Nancy Purvis, a daughter of the late Col. Purvis) joining in the conveyance to bar dower. According to the family traditions McGregor's pension was never restored to him, although Sir Peregrine Maitland, the then Lieut.-Governor of Upper Canada, in a communication to Lord Bathurst, bearing date February 10th, 1827, stated that he had been induced from the circumstances to restore it. His lot in the "Old Survey" of Chatham was, on October 26th, 1849, sold by McGregor's son, Andrew, who is described as of the Township of Howard in the County of Kent. Lieut. McGregor had also another son, John Jas. McGregor, who died in the Township of Beverly in Wentworth County in Decem-

ber, 1890. McGregor answered his last roll-call in 1842, having in that year been accidentally killed by a fall from his horse at Cook's Hollow about a mile and a half from his farm in Flamboro West. The sword of this officer remained in the possession of the family for a couple of generations, until their removal from their home in Flamboro West to Hamilton, when it was unfortunately either lost or stolen, and thus this precious family relic finally disappeared and became lost to the world.

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Reminiscences of Mrs. Gilbert Porte

By Harriet Priddis, May 20, 1902.

Though the history of the pioneer women of London records no daring deed, like that of Abigail Becker, nor historic tramp, like that of Laura Secord, yet every life is a record of such patient endurance of privations, such brave battling with danger, such a wonderful gift for resourceful adaptability, that the simplest story of the old days must bear, within itself, the stirling elements of romance.

While they took no active part in the national or political happenings of the day, it may be interesting to us, and to those that come after us, to hear from their own lips how these public events affected their simple lives. For this reason I have selected for my paper the reminiscences of Mrs. Gilbert Porte, who is today, May 20th, 1902, the oldest continuous resident in London.

My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew McCormick, left Donaghadee, County Down, Ireland, in April, 1829, and reached London, Canada West, in the early summer of the same year. I was then two years and a half old, having been born in Donaghadee on the 31st January, 1827. After arriving here, we stopped with my Uncle Owrey, at Lambeth, for some time, as we could get no shelter in the settlement till the Rev. Mr. Boswell left his house on the north side of York Street, between Thames and Ridout Streets, where Seale's Terrace now stands. It was a very draughty old log building, and the snow would come through the crevices in the wall on our breakfast table. But, such as it was, the only Episcopal service in London, at that time, was held in the kitchen of Boswell's house. As soon as possible, my father secured the grant from Col. Talbot of a lot on the same street, a block further east, and in the spring built a comfortable log house, which was the eighteenth house built in London; and we were the twentieth family to reside here.

The most important adventure of my childhood was being lost in the woods with my little brother within a stone throw of our own home. My mother, after missing us, searched quietly for some time, till, evening beginning to close in, she became alarmed and called in the assistance of all the neighborhood. Our little dog, "Cubbie," came running up, barking and pulling at mother's skirt. Mr. Simeon Morrill advised following its lead;

and, sure enough, that took them to just where we were—in a little shanty occupied by a tailor on the north-west corner of Richmond and York Streets. The good man and his wife had done all they could to pacify us; but we were in great distress, for we knew we were lost; the forest was very dense and dark, and we had wandered about for some time.

The great feature in the landscape in those days was "the creek." I don't remember where it rose—away off in the woods, somewhere east, I suppose. It crossed behind where the Tecumseh now stands, and entered the river a little south of York Street Bridge. It's practical use was supplying water to Morrill's and Hyman's tanneries. I can see it all before me like a panorama; but more change has been caused to the views around London by the cutting down of hills and the building up of gullies than anything else. A great many little, rough, wooden bridges crossed the creek. I remember one especially leading to Proudfoot's Church, which stood far back on the lot, so as to be on high, dry ground, on York Street, about half way between Richmond and Talbot Streets. London has earlier days than I can remember, for York Street Bridge seems always to have been built; and I have often seen it in the early days chained to the immense butternut trees, which were then so plentiful on the banks of the river, to keep it from floating away with the floods.

One of these immense trees at the foot of Richmond Street was quite a land-mark in its day. As it leaned a little to the south, its branches stretched almost across the river, and there was not a boy in the village who could not show you beneath their shade the best speckled trout hole in the world, and a comfortable seat among the branches from which to throw the line.

Indians were such familiar figures that the children had no thought of being frightened at them, though our mothers did not care to have them come in their houses from a general idea that they were not clean. They would sit on the side of the road (there was grass everywhere, when there was not snow), and we'd take out a pail of milk or buttermilk and some bread to them.

My mother had, one day, taken a fine batch of bread from the bake kettles (for we had no stoves, but open fire places with pothooks and kettles), and set it steaming on the dresser. When looking up, she found the doorway darkened by a big Indian, grunting and pointing to his mouth and then to the bread. By signs she made him understand to help himself to the bread. He stalked over, took the biggest loaf and left. She always said he might have taken the whole six without her objecting, so that he left.

They were grateful, too; for one day two of them arrived with a stick across their shoulders supporting a fine deer. They slipped the carcass out of its hide, for they had it ready stripped, and grunting, "For good Cormick; for good Cormick," took their departure with the skin. Judge Wilson, who was a young man, then just married, lived opposite and helped my father cut it up and had one-quarter. Of course, all provision was useful in a new settlement; but venison was not such a treat then as it is now. My father once, going to the back door, found a deer browsing from the twigs of a tree he had cut down the day before. He did not have a gun on hand, and before he could get one, the animal was lost in the woods.

I knew McGregor's Tavern, which always seems to be the beginning of every London history, very well, as it was quite near our house—on the south-west corner of King and Ridout Streets. Ever since I can remember, even before the rebellion, it was a nice looking building. But I have often and often heard Mr. James Williams say when he was a boy about eleven (1826), he was crossing from the Webster settlement to Westminster with Mr. Webster, they saw smoke among the trees and decided Indians were camping near the Forks. On reaching the spot, they looked on the very beginning of the Forest City. Two men had felled some trees, using the brush, covered with quilts, for their beds. The smoke which had attracked attention was smudge to deaden the activity of the mosquitoes. The men were busy preparing logs for the shack, which was to become a land-mark; and a tavern has ever since, and does to this day, stand on the site of McGregors.

Mail came from the old conutry every two or three months, and one never knew when to expect it. I remember my mother once paid a dollar postage on a letter that had done some unnecessary travelling. We used to go to the post office out the Governor's Road, through the woods to Major Schofield's farm, where the Sacred Heart Convent now stands.

It was a log house of the usual style, though there was afterwards a frame addition added to either side. We always waited in the front room, where there was a fire-place, while the Major brought our letters from the room behind, as that was the family bedroom. Mr. Lawrason bought part of the farm, and the building of his mansion was quite an epoch in the town's history.

Other comforts of life besides letters were not to be depended upon, and were often delayed by wind and weather and bad roads. At one time there was not a needle to be found in the village till Mr. O'Brien's or Mr. Lawrason's new stock arrived by Jenning's teams from Hamilton. Mothers with ragged little

girls, or hardly decently covered little boys, went among friends begging for the loan of the priceless little one-eyed machine. Finally my mother bethought her of a pin-cushion that had accompanied her from old Ireland and done duty on board ship. She ripped it open, and behold! a mine of wealth pushed into the sawdust by mischievous little fingers—needles for everybody. Neighbors were all kind to one another in that small community, but some were better able to help than others; and Mrs. Simeon Morrill was a true Mother in Israel to inexperienced young housekeepers, fresh from the country where bread and butter, candles and soap were bought ready-made. Many and many a day she spent in giving private lessons in domestic economy, and cheering hearts discouraged by hardships and incapacity.

Anecdotes of Col. Talbot's bruskness and eccentricity have always been plentiful and apparently interesting in the London district. He seemed never to forget a face he had seen nor a block of ground he had granted. My father bought from Mr. Van Warmer the south-west corner of Horton and Richmond Streets, and not finding the deed quite straight (the owner was an American who had not taken the oath of allegiance), he decided to make sure by getting an original grant from the Colonel. The old gentleman looked sharply at my father, and then turning to his maps, snapped out, "I gave you a grant before, and why do you come bothering for more than your due?" When my father explained the circumstances, he was quite reasonable, granted his request, and freely discussed the prospects of the country and settlement.

There were plenty of good private schools in London from the earliest days. Sheriff Glass, in reminiscent mood, always declared I attended school with him in a building on York Street, near Thames Street, kept by a cooper and his wife. When the cooper got tired of teaching, he went back to his trade (the tapping of his hammer somewhat distracting our attention), and his wife taught for a spell. When domestic affairs required her attention, the cooper once more became school-master. I cannot recall this scene, often described by my old friend, but I distinctly remember a little school on York Street, where a big bear was chained up in the front yard, whether to keep us in order or for a plaything and pet, I cannot say. I was getting to be a big girl when I went to Miss Stinson's school, away up on North Street, now Carling, on the north-east corner of Talbot Street. The house still stands as it then was with the school-room facing North Street, but there is now a little brick addition on Talbot Street. Dr. Stinson lived a few doors north, in the house with a good many steps going up to the front door, now occupied by Mr. Pritchard. It is one of the oldest houses in town, and we

thought it a very handsome place then, though it is much improved now. Young Dr. Owrey, a student of Dr. Stinson, was the first white man drowned at the Forks, but there have been many, many deaths in the treacherous river since.

After leaving Miss Stinson, I went to Mr. Taylor's school on Horton, near Talbot Street. The pupils were both boys and girls, and he coached students preparing for professions at the same time. While I attended, Mr. Thomas Scatchard and Mr. Ephraim Parke had desks on the girls' side of the room, and were subjects of great interest. Mr. and Mrs. Talbot started a school on the corner of Richmond and North Streets, where the Bank of British North America now stands. They were both considered very clever, but did not teach very long. The building was moved many years ago to a few doors further east, and may still be seen very little changed in appearance—No. 197 Queen's Avenue. Mrs. Talbot taught the girls up stairs, her husband the boys down stairs.

The town was growing rapidly; the rebellion was quelled. The military occupied the barracks and social distinctions were being marked by the time. I became a pupil of Mrs. Pringle's Young Ladies' School, and I remember so well when Mrs. Richardson, mother of Mrs. Judge Hughes and Mrs. Judge Horton, started in opposition a more fashionable and expensive establishment, and took away quite a number of pupils. This, of course, raised some feeling of resentment. One day the girls, in passing, came up and looked in our window, naturally interested in the old place. You ought to have seen Mrs. Pringle's indignation as she exclaimed, "Go away directly, you rude girls. If this is all the manners you learn at your fashionable establishment, you might better have remained where you were." Mrs. Pringle was quite artistic, and under her instruction we did very elaborate and quite expensive fancy work. She used to paint the faces and hands on white satin, and we worked the figures and landscapes in colored silk, with varied success; every girl had her sampler in those days, while the mats and footstools in fine crewel work are certainly proof of our perseverance. Then we had many little notions which I think quite as pretty as the fancy work of the present day—rice work, pricked work, etc. etc. I never saw a rag mat till long after I married. Mr. Pringle was as gifted as his wife. He was a cabinet maker by trade, and built an organ entirely himself. He put it in the English Church on trial a few Sundays before it was burned down (Ash Wednesday, 1844), and, as it was not insured, he lost the labor of years.

We celebrated the last coronation (Queen Victoria) in great style, though, of course, we did not hear of it for many weeks

after the event occured. But we were all ready, and when the news came a holiday was proclaimed, and we did justice to the occasion. Every window had its own candle, and in some few extra loyal or extra extravagant cases, every pane of glass, and when the panes were so much smaller than they are now, that meant quite a show. But the greatest effort was made just opposite the Court House. A big hole was dug near the centre of the street and filled with wood for a bonfire. Over it was erected a tripod of very tall posts bound together by chains, from which was suspended an immense tar barrel with the blazing tar pouring out from all sides and dropping on the bonfire below. I still think I have never seen so grand a sight.

I remember the anxious times of the rebellion very well, though I could never quite make out what 'twas all about. People who only read the account in the histories cannot realize the terror of the wild rumors, the difficulty of communication (and consequent suspense), with fathers, husbands and brothers marching off to fight rebels, who were mostly neighbors from over the river.

One bright moonlight night, when one could see to read distinctly, there came a tremendous knocking at the door. My father called, "Who's there?" "Hamilton (sheriff), and Askin (Colonel); come on, and bring your gun." "Haven't got one." "Then bring an axe-helve, stick or something. We hear the rebels are to take possession of the Court House. Who else shall we call up?"

They got together eighteen citizens who for some time guarded the Court House. Then the militia poured in from the country around, and we had ten or more billeted for several days. My mother gave them possession of the kitchen with the bedroom off it, and did her family cooking by snatches as she could best manage when they were away on duty. They lay on the floor at night with a big fire blazing on the hearth the whole time. One Sunday, following the first outbreak, the authorities put gates on York Street bridge. I do not remember anything about Blackfriars bridge. Of course, it was built then, but it was so far away we children did not take it into consideration. It was years and years after before there was anything but a ferry at Wellington Street.

Life generally was disorganized; with the men away, women gathered in groups at each other's houses. As my mother had four children she could not well leave home, so the neighbors came to her. I have often heard her tell of one occasion when three friends were stopping with her. They saw a strange-looking woman come to the gate. When she rapped my mother called "Who's there?"

"A foe"; in a man's voice.

"Then, what are you doing here? This is McCormick's."

"I know it, the pickets are after me. Help me off or my life will be at your door." My mother gave him food, Mrs. Franks a shilling, and they let him out a back door. He ran down the bank and crossed the river on the ice, as he said he would be all right if he could get to Westminster. He had hardly got well off the place before the picket arrived, asking if they had seen a strange woman. They said no, but a strange man had gone by that road, pointing to the opposite direction taken by the fugitive. We always rather gloried in the rumor that this was Lyon McKenzie. My father was away most of the time, as he was color sergeant under Col. Askin. At one time, when they were in Malden, the Colonel said, "Come here, McCormick," and as they stood by a grave, continued with a sigh, "Many and many a time she has carried me on her back."

The regulars were sent for at the first outbreak, but it took them so long to travel the distance (the 32nd came the whole way from Halifax on sleighs) that things had pretty well quieted down before they arrived. I remember being so disappointed when I saw them march through the town, that their coats were not red; but a big soldier threw open his grey overcoat, and my small woman's eyes were delighted with the sight of the red coat, which afterward seemed to take possession of the town. We had five of them billeted on us. Every resident was obliged to accommodate a certain number till the Government secured Dennis O'Brian's new block for a barracks.

Hard times followed the rebellion. Flour was $14.00 a barrel, and small loaves of bakers' bread a York shilling each. To add to the trouble there came an epidemic of hydrophobia. Whether one mad dog did all the damage, or whether it could have been in the air I never heard; but the excitement was intense, and a mad dog chase was a common occurrence. Poor little "Cubie" fell a victim. Most of the cows were bitten and sacrificed; and the loss of milk was a serious hardship to mothers and housekeepers in the prevailing distress.

The residence of the military in our midst, the contract for the barracks, and the start given to building generally, made life easier; and we young folks thought it quite gay. As Dr. O'Flarity, of the 83rd Regiment, lived quite near us on the southeast corner of Richmond and Horton streets, we saw a good deal of what was going on, and were once allowed to attend an amateur performance at a theatre on Wellington street, where the public library now stands. Standing trees supported the board roof and stumps, sawed off pretty evenly, supported the rough board seats. We went in a dark passageway by a door on North street. Dr.

O'Flarity acted the part of a ghost; so I suppose the play was Hamlet, but that I don't remember. There were many complaints of the recklessness and lawlessness of the young officers; no doubt they thought they were out in the woods, and did not take into account the rights of property. As there were no bathrooms in the barracks it was quite a common sight to see squads of men being taken down to the river for a dip. There was one company they called the "flying artillery." It would come rushing down the main street at any hour, and everything had to get out of its way; and it was only just out for a drill, or to exercise the horses.

The most important event of the military life of the early days was the funeral of Col. Maitland. He died at the mess house, about where Garvey's grocery store now stands on Dundas street, and was buried in St. Paul's churchyard. Being in the winter, the coffin was carried on a gun sleigh.

Sir James Alexander took the house opposite ours after the O'Flarity's left, and was very kind and neighborly. He was a fine looking man, very quiet and unassuming in manner; but Lady Alexander was a great sport, and a daring horsewoman. They had high hurdles built on Horton Street near their house, and used to run races and jump on the public street.

The big fires of London are now spoken of as being a blessing, making a way for better buildings; but they were regarded as a terrible calamity at the time; and there were dark suggestions of our town being doomed. I was married at home in 1845 after the burning of the old church (Ash Wednesday, 1846), and before the completion of the new (Ash Wednesday, 1846). Mr. Cronyn said he would not have married me in my father's house if he had had a church for me to go to. The next Sunday we attended services in the Mechanics' Hall, which then stood on the Court House Square, when the alarm of fire was given. and everyone rushed out. There were 190 houses destroyed before the fire was got under control. My eldest son was the first child christened in the New St. Paul's.

When the railway came in 1854 everything was changed. The last signs of pioneer days soon passed away. London was made a city in 1855. St. Paul's chimes called the congregation to worship. My little boys attended the public schools. Business men had private boxes in the post office, from which they took their own mail, and the Great Western train bore our letters twice a day past blocks of houses where I so well remember an unbroken forest.

The Mackenzies of Hyde Park

By Mrs. Evans, May 17, 1904.

The researches of the Middlesex Historical Society into the records of the western part of the province have stimulated a spirit of enquiry among the descendants of the earlier settlers, which cannot fail to have interesting results. Reminiscences are the order of the day. Memories are busy recalling facts and circumstances almost forgotten, and that would almost certainly have been entirely forgotten in another generation. The discovery of the old minute book of the Township of London a few weeks ago was a valuable find. It is almost a doomsday book of the township for the year 1820. The first township meeting was held on the first Monday in January, 1819, at the house of Joshua Applegarth, that gentleman acting as clerk. At that time the site of the city was a part of the township, and apparently not regarded as the most important part either. At this meeting the assessors, roadmasters, pound-keepers and wardens were appointed for the current year. In those early days office holding was no sinecure, and the settlers were obliged to take their turn at it. Each year saw almost an entire change of officials. At the second meeting Mr. Duncan Mackenzie was elected town clerk. He held the position for ten years, which must be regarded as a marvel of permanency. He resigned in 1830, and in the next nineteen years the township had no less than eleven clerks, most of them being satisfied with one year's experience.

From the very first Mr. Duncan Mackenzie took an important part in the affairs of the district. He was born on the 12th of August, 1787, at Ruthven in the parish of Moy, Invernesshire, just at the beginning of the throes of the French Revolution. His boyhood was passed among rumors of wars, and it is not surprising that his first act on coming of age was to enlist against Bonaparte. On the second of April, 1808, he joined the Fifth Battalion of Royal Artillery, and remained in active service until the final overthrow of Napoleon, to which he contributed his share at the battle of Waterloo. Immediately after the peace and the consequent disbandment of the troops, Mr. Mackenzie married Margaret Barclay, also a native of Invernesshire, and decided to come to Canada where grants of land were being given to British veterans on the most favorable terms.

Mr. Mackenzie and his wife sailed for Canada in 1817, and

shortly after their arrival, their eldest daughter, Anne, was born at Miramachi, Nova Scotia.

Mr. Mackenzie's objective point was Col. Talbot's residence, as he had the control of all the Government land in this district. They reached Col. Talbot's on the 21st October, 1818, and at once secured a grant of Lot 23, in the fourth concession of London Township. They took possession on the 17th of November, the site of the present City of London being at that time an unbroken forest. The grant consisted of eight hundred acres, but Mr. Mackenzie relinquished six hundred of these to incoming settlers. The log cabin which he first occupied soon grew too small, and "Dalmagarry Cottage" was built, a house that is still standing, and judging from its present appearance, it must have been quite an imposing mansion for those times. A free hospitality was, and is still, exercised within its walls; and there were few Scotchmen in the district that were not acquainted with its interior.

The nearest neighbor was Margaret Routledge, whose brothers gave the name to Hyde Park, and who afterwards married Mr. Carling, father of Sir John Carling. The public notice of the marriage was fastened to a beech tree, which is still standing, and of which Sir John Carling spoke of in his reminiscences before the Society.

On December 19th, 1818, Mr. Mackenzie's second daughter, Mary, was born, the first white female child born in the district, and the oldest living native white person in this neighborhood. She is now eighty-six years of age, in full possession of all her faculties, a regular attendant at the Presbyterian Church at Hyde Park, three-quarters of a mile away, and quite capable of superintending the dinner for the family on Sundays when the weather prevents her attending church. She is also an expert needle-woman, being quite at home on such fine and intricate work as netting, doilies, etc. Mrs. Macdonald resides with her son-in-law, Mr. Donald McMillan, for many years connected with the London Mutual Insurance Company, though now retired.

It is not easy to understand at the present day the difficulties the early settlers had to encounter, particularly settlers from the Old Country, ignorant as they were of the conditions of life in Canada. The long voyage in a sailing vessel across the ocean was the slightest of their troubles. When they came to the St. Lawrence rapids they had fifty miles of jolting over a rough wagon road. At Prescott they were able to take boat for Kingston, seventy miles further up. Toronto, or, as it was then called, York, was a hundred and seventy miles further. From York they crossed to the mouth of the Niagara River, where they again took wagon for Queenston, seven miles distant; and

from that town, still by wagon, to Fort Erie, a distance of twenty-nine miles. At Fort Erie, they took boat for Long Point, eighty miles away, paying £17-6s for the trip. Another boat brought them to Kettle Creek, a distance of sixty miles, for which they paid £3-5s, and £1-1s paid their wagon fare from there to this city. They were just twenty-seven days making the journey from Cornwall to Col. Talbot's house—days that no doubt impressed them strongly, with the extend of their adopted country.

On their farm they had the usual privations of all early settlers, although as this district was settled with comparative rapidity, their hardships was much less than in many other parts of the province. Forty years after Mrs. Duncan Mackenzie settled near Hyde Park, the wolves made it impossible to raise sheep west of Chatham; nor was there a single market for any kind of produce between Chatham and Windsor. And yet there were numerous little settlements scattered through that district as old as Hyde Park settlement.

The absence of roads was, of course, one of the main difficulties with which the early settlers had to contend. Of roads, as we understand them now, there did not exist one in the province. Twenty years after Mr. Mackenzie settled at Hyde Park, the only piece of gravelled road in Ontario was on Yonge Street, between Toronto and Thornhill, about twelve miles. The other roads were just cut through the woods, with trunks of trees thrown across wherever the ground was swampy. Even these "Corduroy roads," as they were called, were few and far between, being the stage routes between the different towns and villages. The ordinary side roads and concession lines were narrow tracks winding among the trees, obstructed here and there with fallen logs, which it was easier to go around than remove, and blazed at intervals, so that in the day time a person with good eye-sight would have very little difficulty in finding his way. Of bridges, there were none; and when streams had to be crossed the road was blazed to a shallow part where it could be forded. At the forks of the river, just below the present Court House, a family named Beverly established a ferry; but its operations were very uncertain. Ague was very prevalent in all these settlements, the Beverly family suffering greatly; and when the passengers had to wait for hours for some one to ferry them across, they used to say they were waiting until some of the family would stop shaking. The ford at the forks was therefore the principle thoroughfare. When our big sewer system was being put down a few years ago, the old corduroy road leading to the ford was struck on Ridout Street, at a depth of seven feet below the surface.

This absence of roads naturally had the effect of isolating the different settlements, and, to a certain extent, every individual settler. Each family was in a measure compelled to be self-sustaining and self-reliant. The first orchard in this neighborhood was planted by Mr. Mackenzie with trees grown from apple seeds which he brought with him from the old country. Instead of handsome cooking stoves the settlers had the crane and pot hooks, which with a pair of tongs decorated every chimney. Each family made its own soap and candles, made its own yarn, and worked it up into mittens, stockings, comforters, etc., and made in fact, most of its own clothes and furniture. For fancy furniture, the neighborhood was indebted to John Fralick, a sort of universal genius living near Byron. He was a good mechanic; and most of the houses contained specimens of his handiwork, amongst them being the big and little spinning-wheels which were in great demand by the women. There are many still living who remember him as a familiar figure about the city. Doctors were unknown, and each household had simple remedies for ordinary complaints. When an emergency occurred it had to be met with the means on hand. Probably the first surgical operation in the township was performed by Mrs. Mackenzie. One of the boys had his toe chopped off with an axe. She promptly fastened it on again, and the operation was as successful as if it had been performed by the College of Physicians.

One of the pleasures which Mrs. Mackenzie's children and grand children well remember was to go out to the bush with her while she would be gathering herbs for these medicinal uses. Not only hyssop and hoar-hound were found, but sweet cicely, squaw-berries, ground nuts, spice wood and crinkley root, to their great delight. Bunches of these herbs adorned the ample kitchen, as well as golden corn braided by the husks, and onions by their tops.

In the large dining-room adjoining, the family gathered in the winter evenings around the open fire with its blazing logs; and while the girls would be knitting or sewing, and the boys engaged in knitting or other occupations, their mother would read aloud—for she was a woman of literary taste and good education for those days. The amusement of the young people consisted chiefly in playing pranks on each other; and many an enjoyable story has come down to the descendants of the mischievous doings of the boys of those days.

The older children had to begin their education at home; but they were not very old when a teacher was secured for the district, and they plodded to school through the woods six days a week. Later, Saturday afternoon was given as a holiday; and

the whole Saturday holiday was introduced about the time of Lennie's Grammar, when the children stood in line in front of the teacher in order of merit, swinging rythmetically from side to side and memorizing lists. This they did with such thoroughness that they could recite those lists with the rapidity of the wind, for instance: The adverbs are so, no, not, nay, yea, yes, too, well, up, very, how, far, now, then, ill, soon, much, here, there, where, whence, thence.

There were in all seven children in Mr. Mackenzie's family. The eldest was Anne, who married William MacMillan, P. L. S., and became the mother of ten children, one of whom, Duncan, represented East Middlesex in the Dominion Parliament, and afterwards became Judge MacMillan. Donald still resides at Hyde Park, and the three daughters, Mrs. Richard J. Evans, and the Misses Kate and Annie, are well known in the city. Four of the sons are living in other parts of Canada and the States. The second daughter, Mary, married Alexander Macdonald and had three children, with one of whom she still lives near the old homestead. She has been already referred to as the oldest living native of the district. Margaret married Wm. Moore, of London, and her family still reside here, one son, John, being a member of the firm of Moore & Henry, architects, and the other, Percy, of Fraser & Moore, barristers. Isabella became Mrs. Patterson, and is still living in Delaware with her daughter; and Sarah is the wife of Dr. Hoare, of Strathroy. Of the sons, George was county clerk of Middlesex until his death in 1891, and John A. is the county judge of Lambton. Altogether there are sixty-five descendants of Duncan Mackenzie living, of whom fifty-two are Canadians.

Whenever a cow was killed the skin was taken to a tanner and half left in payment for sole leather, and a journeyman cobbler stayed at the house and made the family shoes. Incidentally he supplied gum for the children, as they usually stole his wax for that purpose. The first mill was near the waterworks; and corn had to be brought there to be ground. On one occasion when Squire Mackenzie took a load of corn to the mill a storm came on as he was returning home. He took the corn out, sat on it to keep it dry, and held the horse, as he was fearful of losing his way in the intense darkness. At daybreak he found that he was not a quarter of a mile from home.

Not long after Mr. Mackenzie's arrival in Middlesex, the mutterings of the rebellion began, under the leadership of his namesake, William Lyon Mackenzie. Mr. Duncan Mackenzie's military experience was at once utilized, and he received a commission as captain of the first battery of artillery raised in the west. During the trouble he was stationed at Chippewa. When

the rebellion was suppressed he raised and maintained for fifteen years a battery in this city, which was the foundation of the present city battery. He was a thorough soldier, and the spirit survived in his family. One of his grandsons, the late Judge MacMillan, was one of the ensigns who received the first colors presented to the Seventh Regiment. He and another grandson, Percy Moore, served in the Northwest Rebellion, while still another, Harold Mackenzie, son of Judge Mackenzie, of Sarnia, fought in the war in South Africa.

In religion Mr. Mackenzie was an ardent Presbyterian, and was the chairman of the committee that was entrusted with the erection of the First Church of Scotland in this district. The other members of the committee were Messrs. John Michie, John Birrell, William McMillan (Mr. Mackenzie's son-in-law), William Clark and James McLaren. In 1842 Mr. Mackenzie laid the corner stone of St. Andrew's Church. It cost five hundred dollars, and has long since been replaced by the present magnificent structure.

About 1834 Mr. Duncan Mackenzie was appointed a magistrate. There was not much formality in the court over which he presided. Costs cut no figure in the cases—the plaintiff, the defendant and the magistrate talking it over in a friendly way, perhaps by the roadside, and the judgment was quietly accepted and carried out without the interference of the plaintiff. He held this honorable position until the time of his death in 1874.

It would be hard indeed to estimate what the country owes to a man of his strength of character, untiring industry and sterling integrity, who not only carved out a home for himself out of those forest wilds, but was identified with each progressive step in the advancement of the district, and left behind him children and grandchildren to bear the honored name, and revere the memory of those brave pioneers.

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BINDERY INC.
MAR 90
N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962